MAXIMUM
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BRONTEZ PURNELL
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HITAP
EAST ANGLIA SCENE REPORT
2012 YEAR END TOP 10s
MARCH 2013
US/CAN $4

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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For what it's worth, here are some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

MARIAM BASTANI

- ABSURDO-Tots Sants-EP
- GOOD THROB-Feminazi-EP
- INSERVIBLES-Una Vida de Tristeza-EP
- DAWN OF HUMANS-Blurst of the Birdfish-EP
- THE SLEEPERS-Painless Nights-12"
- LOTUS FUCKER-Forever My Fighting Spirit-12"
- MANPIG-The Grand Negative-12"
- LAS OTRAS-EP / MALDITO PAIS-12"
- HANK WOOD AND THE...-Go Home-12"
- NUN-Solvents/Cronenberg-45

WILL BLOMQUIST – NEW TOP TEN!!!

- DAWN OF HUMANS-Blurst of the Birdfish-EP
- LOTUS FUCKER-Forever My Fighting Spirit-12"
- TEMPEST-Solace-EP
- TO THE POINT-EP / KRÜGER-EP
- REIVERS-Sympathetic Shock-LP
- MALDITO PAIS-12" / GOOD THROB-Feminazi-EP
- ZYANOSE-Isolation-EP / LOS CAIDOS-LP+EP
- DEBORAH KANT-Terminal Rail/Route-LP
- ACTS OF SEDITION/RAW NERVES-split
- IN DIGUST / STILLSUIT-live

MITCH CARDWELL

- HANK WOOD AND THE...-Go Home-12"
- SLEEPERS-Painless Nights-12"
- GERMAN SHEPHERDS-Music for Sick Queers-LP
- DAWN OF HUMANS-Blurst of the Birdfish-EP
- TACO LEG-12"
- ANA LUCIA-LP
- STREET EATERS-12"
- CHEMICALS-For Real, for Life...-12"
- OUTER MINDS-Behind the Mirror-LP
- CRAZY SPIRIT-12"

ROBERT COLLINS

- PERMANENT RUIN-live
- REPLICA-live
- VEX-live
- SYSTEMATIK-live
- DRAPETOMANIA-live
- SAD BOYS-live
- IN DISGUST-live
- WHITE LUNG-live
- NUDES-live / C.R.A.S.H.-live
- RAD-live / COPS-live

LAYLA GIBBON

- GOOD THROB-Feminazi-EP
- ASTRAL TRAVEL-Body Melt/Povos-45
- LAS OTRAS-Las Otras-EP
- THE STOPS-Wait for Today-EP
- TACO LEG-12"
- PEACH KELLI POP-12"
- INSERVIBLES-Una Vida de Tristeza-EP
- CRAZY SPIRIT-12"
- NUN-Solvents/Cronenberg-45
- HANKWOOD AND THE...-12" / BUKKAKE BOYS-LP

DAN GOETZ

- BUKKAKE BOYS-LP
- ALTERED BOYS-The Nudge-EP
- MANPIG-The Grand Negative-12"
- PUBERTY WOUNDS-live
- WAREHOUSE VALUE-Fucked Up on Lo-Fi-EP
- RECIDE-Statues-EP
- LOTUS FUCKER-Forever My Fighting Spirit-12"
- THE LIGHT-live
- LAS OTRAS-Las Otras-EP
- DAGGER EYES-12"

GREG HARVESTER

- LAS OTRAS-EP
- UPPGÅNG OCH FALL-Partyt Är Över-EP
- RAS-Yellow-12"
- THE STOPS-Wait for Today-EP
- MUJERES-Soft Gems-LP
- RAGANA-All's Lost-tape
- VALLEY BOYS-tape
- ICON GALLERY-Valiance/The Pact-45
- ABSURDO-Tots Sants-EP
- SAD BOYS-live

KENNY KAOS

- PROTO KIDS-Such a Waste/What Did I Expect-45
- MUJERES-Soft Gems-LP
- IMPO AND THE TENTS-45
- RAMMA LAMMA-Gang/We All Know-45
- THE STOPS-Wait for Today-EP
- NUN-Solvents/Cronenberg-45
- NEEDLE AUTOMATIX-45
- THE SHRILLS-Meltdown-LP
- THE DAGGER EYES-12"
- PEACH KELLI POP-12"

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TOP 10

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CAROLYN KEDDY

- EX-CULT-LP / TACO LEG-12"
- PARQUET COURTS-American Specialties-LP
- DAWN OF HUMANS-Burst of the Birdfish-EP
- MUJERES-Soft Gems-LP
- NEEDLE AUTOMATIX-45
- HANK WOOD AND THE ...-Go Home-LP
- THE SHRILLS-Meltdown-LP
- CHEMICALS-For Real, For Life, Forever...-12"
- GERMAN SHEPHERDS-Music for Sick Queers-LP
- CRAZY SPIRIT-12"

SAM LEFEBVRE

Out of Town...

RAY LUJAN

- ANCHORS-Lost at the Bottom-CD
- DAIKON-Complaining Songs-12"
- DONALD THOMPSON-II-EP / HEAT DUST-10"
- HOLLY BETH VINCENT-Hey Boy/Smash-45
- IMPO AND THE TENTS-Nothing to Say/That Girl-45
- ANA LUCIA-LP / PEACH KELLI POP-12"
- SHORTWAVE PARTY–Hopeless/Where to Begin-45
- SNUFF-5-4-3-2-1...Perhaps?-CD
- THE STEREO STATE-CD / UNION JACK-CD
- KICKER-live / BAD COP/BAD COP-live / X-live

KEVIN MANION

- LOWER-Someone's Got it in for Me/But There...-45
- HANK WOOD AND THE...-Go Home-12"
- BLOODY HAMMER-12"
- ICON GALLERY-Valiance/The Pact-45
- ABSURDO-Tots Sants-EP
- LOTUS FUCKER-Forever My Fighting Spirit-12"
- INSERVIBLES-Una Vida de Tristeza-EP
- ALTERED BOYS-The Nudge-EP
- RATIONAL ANIMALS-45
- OVENS-live

LYDIA PHELPS

- NUN-Solvents/Cronenberg-45
- INSERVIBLES-Una Vida de Tristeza-EP
- GOOD THROB-Feminazi-EP
- LOWER-Someone's Got it.../But There Has...-45
- MALTIDO PAIS-12" / EX-CULT-LP
- UPPGÅNG OCH FALL-Partyt Är Över-EP
- PRIESTS-Personal Planes/Radiation-45
- REPETITOR-Dobrodošli na Okean-CD
- ALTERED BOYS-The Nudge-EP
- C.R.A.S.H.-live / DRAPETOMANIA-live

FRED SCHRUNK

Too Partied Out...

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

Off on tour in the wonderful land of OZ.

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Scam #6*
- *Shock & Awe! #5*
- *Stiches in my Head #4*
- *Dreams of Donuts #16*
- *One Way Ticket #7 1/2*
- *Agua Pura*
- *Dead Mecca*
- *It's Just a Phase*
- *Degenerate #11*
- *EqualizingxDistort Vol.2 #4*

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#186/November '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#188/January '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/February '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/March '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#195/August '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#197/October '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#234/November '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/December '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/January '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, Artcore, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/March '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/April '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, Snakepit zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/August '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/September '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, Trust zine.

#245/October '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/November '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/December '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#249/February '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/March '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/August '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/September '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/October '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/November '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/December '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/January '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/February '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, Baboon of Sickness zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, Trust fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (Avow zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen & Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, We're Gonna Fight zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. MRR 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston & Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, & more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas,Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed,, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown,Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/ Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids. Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault. Fuera De Linea

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore

#322/March '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta

#323/April '10. The Spits, Face the Rail, Battletorn, Scatha, Dadfag, Attentat Sonore, Partibrejkers, Mob Rules, Last Pogo, John Paull Williams from Really Red, Chuck Warner.

#324/May '10. Bruce Roehrs memorial,, Kleenex/Liliput, Necro Hippies, Isterismo, RVIVR, Iceage, Tubers, Rot Shit, Beefeater, Cairo IL.

#325/June '10. X (Australia), Daylight Robbery, Ty Segall, Morne, Nü Sensae, Pollution, Th' Inbred, Bad Sports, Wankys, Rakosi, Lotus Fucker

#326/July '10. U-ron from Really Red, Slang, Bunny Skulls, Trash Kit, Sedition, High Castle, Marcel Duchamp, Street Eaters, Circle Pit, Mehkago NT, Random Conflict, New Orleans & Calgary scene reports.

#327/August '10. Os Estudantes, The Curse, Pekinska Patka, Venereans, Thou, Italian Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#328/Mocktober '10. Deathrats, The Conversions, Agnostic Front, Puffy Areolas, Super Wild Horses, Rape Revenge, Bernays Propaganda, New York and Czech Republic Scene Report, Ratcharge Zine, and Culo.

#330/November '10. Forgetters, Acephalix, Foreign Objects, Hank IV, Pheromoans, La La Vasquez, Credentials, Bukkake Boys, Negative Lifestyle, Tyranna, Katriina Etholen, Ireland Scene Report.

#333/February '11. The Welders, Touch & Go Fanzine, Rai Ko Ris, Dolly Mixture, Hitman, Straight Arrows, Eskapo Phillippines Tour Diary, Venezuela Scene Report, Olympia Scene Report w/Weird TV, White Boss, Milk Music, Hpp, Hysterics, Son Skull, Rvivr, Hail Seizures, Broken Water, Gun Outfit.

#334/March '11. 2010 Year End Top Tens, A State of Mind, Useless Children, Straight Arrows, Sober Living for the Revolution, DC Scene Report

#335/April '11. Siege, Crazy Spirit, 1981, Mauser, Devour, Icon Gallery, Sunshine SS, Timmy's Organism, Whitney House, Attention Span, Michigan Scene Report.

#336/May '11. Kriegshög, Steve Ignorant, Teargas, Tantrum, Hygeine, Shoppers, Chris Walter, Adrenalin OD, Spastic Panthers, Hungarian Scene Report.

#337/June '11. Destroy All Movies, John Morton/Electric Eels, White Fence, Ydinperhe, Nux Vomica, Vanya Bonecrusher, Black Feet, Uzi Rash, This is LA not L.A.: '80s Hardcore Flyers in New Orleans, Buffalo NY Scene Report.

#339/August '11. Head Cleaners, Midnite Snaxxx, Cokskar, Small Bones, Xcentric Noise Records, Grown Ups, Youth Avoiders, Tomek Lipinski/Brygada Kryzys, Afternoon Gentlemen, Czech Punk History pt 2.

#340/September '11. Demokhratia, GG King, Ivan Brun, B-Lines, State Poison, Jeremy Hush, Love Triangle, Unlearn, Deaf Club Oral History, Final part of the Czech Punk History.

#341/October '11. Brian Walsby, Plates, Decraneo, Diet Cokeheads, Royal Headache, Ed Nasty & the Dopeds, Black Mamba Beat Tour of South Africa, Unfit Scum, Mongrel Zine.

#342/November '11. Kyushu Noisecore Summit, Brown Sugar, Vapid, No Rest, Brain Killer, Roach Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires & Graces.

#343/December '11. Porkeria, Descarados, Peace or Annihilation, E.A.T.E.R, Poly Styrene, Severence Package, Katorga Works, Unwanted Christmas Presents, Resist Her Transistor. Motel, Brain F, IFB, Nekromantiker, Aires & Graces.

#344/January '12. OBN IIIs, Social Chaos, Neo Cons, Alice Bag, Vaginors, Bloodkrow Butcher, Wartorn, Shitty Limits Last Show Report, Wretched, Zero Progress Tour Diary Part 1, Means to an End Fest Slick 46, Toughskins, No Gods No Matress Zine.

#345/Febuary '12. 2011 Year End Top Tens, Big Eyes, Terrible Feelings, Zero Progress Tour Report pt 2, The Unruled, Rapid Loss.

#346/March '12. Barchen Und Die Milchbubies, Who Killed Spikey Jacket, Kromosom tour of Japan, Globsters, Night Birds, Tribal War, Give Praise, Refuse records.

#347/April '12. Ron Paul Special Issue, Carburetor Dung, Dark Times, Neon Piss, Kruel, Lapinpolthajat, Criminal Code, Slice Harvester zine, Iron Hand, Indigesti, Damnable Excite Zombies, Hawaii Scene Report.

#348/May '12. Seein' Red, Disorder, Lebakko, Da vs. Wax Idols, Anitmob, Leprosy, Acid Baby Jesus, Crimson Scarlet, Nasa Space Universe, Apache Dropout, Konton Crasher, Negazione, Defy.

#349/June '12. Omegas Zyanose, Antisect, Negative Standards, No Statik, Your Pest Band, Eutanasia, Appalachian Terror Unit, Power Age, Only Fumes and Corpses, Skizophrenia, David Ensminger, Greek Scece Report.

#350/July '12. The Photo Issue: Justine Demetrick, Ricky Adam, Jeanne Hansen, Don Pyle, Chris Boarts Larsen, Maria da Piedade Morais.

#351/August '12. 30th Anniversary Issue: MRR's worst & best, the Tim Yo covers & the story behind Greentaping, Napalm Raid, God Equals Genocide, Stressors, American Sun, Ferocious X, Stripmines, Skitsystem, Jyan y Diëgo, Banran.

#352/September '12. Stagnation, Luta Armada, Vaaralliinen, Frozen Teens, Brain Slug, Noisecore Roundtable #2, Kohosh, Kvoteringen, Gritos de Resistencia, Alabaster Choad, Dipers, Murder in the Front Row, Support NYC.

#353/October '12. Brain Tumors, Effluxus, Anti Cimex, the Cravats, Unlearn, Warsong, Sick/ Tired, To Live A Lie records, Stories from the Punk Underground in Peru, Bad Daddies, Imminent Destruction records with Lastly, Desperdicio, Against the Grain, Disturd.

#354/November '12. Replica, Ancient Filth, Synthetic ID, Maximo Volumne, O Inimigo, The Splits, Ohmwar, Beatrap, Victims Tour Diaty Part II, Girth records.

#357/February '13. Forward, Hounds of Hate, Contorture, Kicker, Nothing, Lunatic Fringe, Detonate records, Beatnik Termites, Detroit Scene Report.

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LETTERS

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or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dearest MRR—
Thanks for your continued support by reviewing issue #18 of *Ont Road* fanzine, and sending me a complimentary copy of *MRR* through the post. As a side note to the review, I'd just like to add an important piece of information that was left out, which I'm sure your readers are interested in.

There is an 8000-word article in the zine, which I wrote about my experiences of spending six days on the road with Leatherface, in February 2012, shortly before their break up.

This is a rich, deep and insightful look into the band, that I'm sure many of your readers would be interested in reading. If anyone would like a copy, drop me an email and we can work out a postage rate. Keep up your dedicated hard work to this beautiful punk-rock subculture.
—Lukas Schwarzbrennen,
Ont Road fanzine

Hey guys—
Just wanted to write to make a clarification. In the last issue's review of the latest Pink Reason 45 the reviewer stated that the records were manufactured in our home. While all the printing and assembly is done in our basement, the vinyl itself was pressed at Musicol. Musicol is also based out of a residential house nearby and a friend of ours pressed the records in the basement there, but we have nothing to do personally with that operation. It has existed in Columbus since the late '60s.
Thanks,
—Kevin Failure
Savage Quality recordings

Hey MRR—
I just wanted to rebut some smear talk by the gents in Secret Prostitutes. While I haven't heard the record that Peter and Susanne P.Trash put out for SP, it seems from the interview that the band were unhappy with the way the record turned out on wax. That's a bummer.

I've had the pleasure of working with P.Trash on a few records over the years and in that time, have gotten to know Peter and Susanne personally. I even had the chance to check out P.Trash HQ in person. What a set up! Peter and Susanne put their hearts into forging opportunities for our shitty bands to be heard and, while it is of course not a completely selfless act (Peter makes P.Trash his primary source of income), the two of them do their best to keep punk rock records flowing from the plant into the greasy little mitts of punks everywhere. They certainly aren't sitting around with their fingers up their noses watching cartoons. I know this to be fact.

The Secret Prostitutes are certainly entitled to their opinions, but in my mind, it seems ridiculous to insult someone because they paid for your record and you're unhappy with the way it turned out. Maybe I don't know the whole story, but I'm using the data I pulled from the interview. I'm sure the masters sounded brilliant to the band before the pressing plant got a hold of it.
Don't shit where you eat.
—Rob Seaton

Hey there!
I saw the review of my zine, *Expedite Death*, and it says 12 pages not 24, which is the correct number of pages. Just thought I should let you know.
Thanks,
—Expedite Death zine

Hey MRR—
I sent y'all my zine in last month for review. Then just now, I was skimming through a friend's copy of *MRR* and realized I should have included all the info about contact and postage and stuff. Silly me. Let me give that to you here. Hope that's not too cumbersome.

The zine is *xVagrancyx* #2 (the X's are silent!). Cost is $2 in the US—international would probably be like a dollar more. Trades welcome. They're half size—8.5 x 11. 90 pages. Copied.
This is my email: xvagrancyx@gmail.com. Mailing address is 836A 29th Street / Oakland, CA 94608 USA.
Thanks!
—Montelle

Dear MRR—
Hey there, to all you shitworkers at *MRR*. If it weren't for you where would *MRR* be today? It's because of fine, outstanding ghetto punx like you who go out of their way to put print on paper, that punx like myself who are locked up can stay updated on the scene out there in the free world...I'm not like most punx who can send stamps or cash to receive your zine. I have to write Bound Together Books in San Francisco to receive issues of *MRR* and Razorcake, which I read from cover to cover. Better late than never, right? Anyhow, I just wanted to say thank you to all the shitworkers who ever put time in at *MRR*. Punx is a lifestyle that can't be denied; it's what we live for and I truly appreciate all you do at *MRR*.

Anyway, this is Puke AKA William (lol) and I'm writing in response to your letter section (#354) of Busby's letter. I agree with Busby. There's so much fucked up shit going on behind the wall that unless you have something to offer (money, drugs) or are willing to spend the rest of your life in prison for certain actions, there's no loyalty. There's so much shit talk drama going on, friends turning into enemies over a cig or homemade wine

that you have to almost sleep with one eye open. Whatever happened to punx getting together, listening to some good ol' punx and sharing stories of the good ol' days when punx stuck together?

All that goes out the back door once we hit the state, or for that matter, the county. Like Busby said, everyone is trying to be top dog and tuff guys. The thing is, there are dudes in here who are doing a grip of time, seeing some peace punx come walking through the door who become victims of all the institutional rules—and on top of that, if they don't follow the top dog rules of the day, they become their victims. Here's the crazy part: the dudes who are making the rules are breaking their own rules. Sad! We have dudes in here on drug charges because of the 3-Strike law, who shouldn't be doing more than a 30-day dry-out, who have to follow these daily rules as well as these institutional rules, and if they break any one of these rules there's that chance that they'll never see freedom again. And people wonder why they created SNY.

There's an ol' saying "Why can't we all get along?" There's so much hate in here it truly makes a person regret the creation of drugs, 'cause if there were no drugs there would be no overpopulation in the prison system. You can go ask 100 inmates in jails or prisons and 95 of them will tell you if they weren't on some sort of head change, they would have never committed the crime. I'll be the first to raise my hand—I'm an addict and if I weren't high, I wouldn't have been out there selling drugs to keep my drug supply going too. Then you have all these people in here who should be in here, like child molesters, who should never see daylight again and, if I say so myself, should be on death row. Anyhow, there will come a day when a lot of innocent people will be set free of the 3-Strike law and be able to enjoy a head change if they choose to, but as it stands right now its almost a death wish for anyone to do so.

Anyways, sorry for going off on left field but the fact is, I agree with Busby and a lot of things he said, and a big "Punx Rock!" goes out to you my fella' punx for keeping it real.

Also, I'm seeking penpals from all over the world. I would really forever be in your debt if you would post my info in your zine. So if there's any punx out there who wouldn't mind sending this old school punx some flyers or pics, I will respond to all who write. Punx is a lifestyle that can't be denied! Support your local scene!
Keep it punx,
—Puke
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Greetings MRR—
After a couple of issues passed by since I submitted a guest column, I must admit I was surprised to see it in the February issue. I had assumed it was way too lengthy and self-absorbed, but you printed it anyway.

Unfortunately, I submitted contact information which is no longer relevant. Things did not work out between Skullets and the booking duo we urged people to contact, via the Skullets' DIY, all-ages Facebook page.

In fact, the people from Back Alley Booking tried to "steal" the Resistant Culture show that *we* booked. They attempted to lock us out of the show, and fortunately we were able to stop them without the show being adversely affected. The show turned out really well!

As a result, Skullets has now become Kipple City Productions and we urge you to contact us on the renamed Facebook page or at www.kipplecityproductions@gmail.com.

In closing, thank you to all of the *MRR* shitworkers and contributors as well as all of the bands and fans who keep punk rock alive!
Never give up, never give in!
—Bryan Iverson AKA Jerry Hatrick
Mark D. Myers #27817
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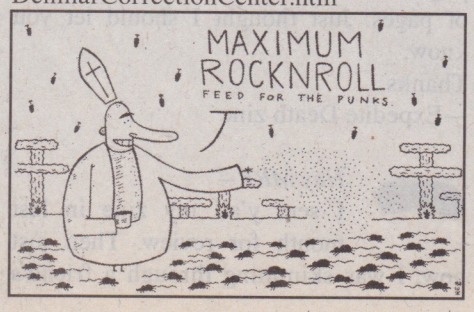

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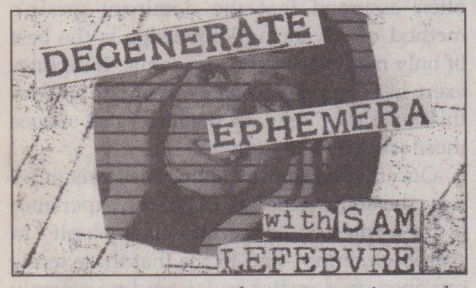

Below is a rough excerpt from the introduction of a larger essay that I'm writing about depoliticized post-punk. Much of what's below will seem pretty heavy-handed, but I intend to expand upon each idea defined here in the introduction. Considering this is the year-end issue, the phenomenon addressed in this piece seems particularly apt. I don't name any bands in this introduction but the larger piece will, and a quick glance at some of my favorite records from this year will confirm astute readers' suspicions regarding who I am championing.

This is the end of my first full year of living in the Bay Area and as a *Maximum* columnist. It's been a great year for my aspirations as a music writer, but I must say that writing reviews and this column for *MRR* is my favorite gig. Aside from writing *Degenerate*, it's the only time I can be certain that my audience comprises punks, my favorite readership.

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In 2012, the post-punk ideology is divorced from the traditional post-punk sound. The various musical tropes established by the many trajectories of 1980s post-punk are now rock establishment. This began shortly after the turn of the century, in a more stylistically tangential way, and now seems more ingrained than ever. The tones, moods, rigidity or ramshackle qualities we associate with that genre tagging of post-punk are marketable and sought after by large, non-autonomous record labels. The punk press no longer monopolizes coverage of this music (although it often sources them first), leaving post-punk to be zealously reported on by the mainstream indie press. With such attention paid to this musical style, we have seen in the last couple of years, more than ever, groups adopting its tropes with traditional success as their goal, completely devoid of the ideology that originally accompanied post-punk.

Careerists and opportunists form post-punk bands to pander to taste-making record labels, media outlets and fickle consumer bases with a flagrant lack of concern for any ethos to accompany their operation. It has progressed beyond the common theme of multi-national corporations tossing endorsements at punk bands and larger record labels courting those groups who have operated for years on a DIY scale—groups are now formed with these tainting sponsorships as a goal. These new players measure their success by and seek validation from media outlets and record labels as ideologically devoid as themselves.

What we now see is the scrupulous underground severing its ties to the new school of post-punk, the new post-punk establishment, because it lacks ethically or politically cognizant modes of conduct and any semblance of a DIY mentality. Post-punk is being marginalized to a sound, stripped of its socio-political context and the ideology it was born of in the 1980s. As the underground distances itself from the new school of this music, we see post-punk groups who do subscribe to an ideology injecting the sound with new, inaccessible traits. Post-punk groups aligned with what is called here a "post-punk ideology" are emerging pitted against the relative mainstream success sought by careerists and their ilk creating similar music.

The nature of this separation is illustrated in the sonic disparity between ideological post-punk and careerist post-punk. A clear line is drawn in the sand. In the last couple of years, underground post-punk groups have adopted an assertive mean-spiritedness and burliness. By a stretch, it's a humorless hardcore approach to post-punk tropes. It's starkly at odds with the cultivated ambiguity and the vague moods created by opportunist post-punk musicians on the fly.

As much as we can trace the sonic characteristics that arguably constitute a post-punk musical style to certain groups and techniques in the 1980s, the term arose not to describe the sound, but an ideology shared by the groups. The ideology is basically that of a punk ideology, but the term "post-punk" is necessitated by the mere fact that these groups didn't sound like punk bands.

To continue this work, an aside must be made to defend the assertion that a "punk ideology" even exists, and strive to define it without contradicting its very nature. If the thought of a defined "punk ideology" seems initially impossible or objectionable, that's healthy and actually in line with its very tenets proposed here. These tenets do not limit, hinder or narrow what is punk—rather they are inherently liberating, a license to do as one pleases and are really only instated to protect the ability to do so.

1. Autonomy, defined as self-governance, and encompassing, for these purposes, the claim that punk is not validated by any institution or its credentialed experts and professionals.2. The assertion that anyone can start a band, regardless of skill level. By extension, a recording of any fidelity is release-worthy, in even the most primitive packaging, with the poorest distribution imaginable and that none of these aspects make a release any less credible than another punk or post-punk release.

Neither of these tenets presupposes a sonic formula. It's an ideology revolving around independence and a deliberate lack of constraints. It imbues the performers with an inalienable right to push forward without fear of being ostracized. The insistence on autonomy isn't intended to limit performers' financial success or potential fame, although it's often portrayed that way. The insistence on autonomy is an effort to protect the very lack of constraints that a post-punk ideology celebrates.

This is incomplete and unedited and I expect it might bother many of you. Let me know.

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Hey *Maximum*! How's it going? This is my *thirteenth column*, which means it's my one-year anniversary. Sick! Hell of thanks for letting me publish this thing, I'm pretty stoked about it. For my one-year anniversary I am going to tell you a story about my life.

2004 was a weird year to be trans. Like, widespread internet access made information about how to transition pretty much accessible, but most of that information was written by middle-class and rich white women, for middle-class and rich white women. If you were looking you could find strap-on.org, which started off as the Chainsaw records message board, which was a fuckin' decade ahead of its time in terms of arguing on the internet and all the social justice stuff the kids can't get enough of on tumblr these days. But if you were a dumb kid and the social justice language on strap-on.org scared the shit out of you, and you thought you might be trans but you didn't want to grow up and be a Gap-shopping mum, it was a bleak scene: it was mostly internet tests that boiled down to "do you hate math? You are probably a girl." It sucked. I didn't know what to do so I moved to New York. I thought maybe moving to New York would turn me into the kind of person who's able to bravely resist gender norms or whatever. It didn't though. Moving to New York just meant everything was expensive as fuck and the bars didn't close until 4 AM. I moved there with a girl I was dating, she broke up with me pretty much immediately, I got a job at the Strand and then I spent all my time blogging about gender and feelings.

Dude, I blogged hard. I was listening to a bunch of abrasive electronic music right around then—like Kid 606 and this guy Poisson D'Avril, who I don't think ever put out a record—and a friend gave me some electronic music software for my dumb old computer and I spent a few months trying to be a tough electronic hardcore musician—it's pretty funny, I put the complete and inept thirteen-minute discography up at fighterhayabusa.bandcamp.com if you wanna laugh at me from eight years ago.

I thought how the fuck am I supposed to be trans, trans women are all either, like, boring and hungry for respectability, or else they are way cooler and more self-assured than my dumb punker doofus idiot ass is ever gonna be. Some friends were said, look, come to this thing called the Trans Health Conference in Philly, it'll be cool, hang out with trans people, maybe it'll help. So I said okay.

The Trans Health Conference is still around and it's become this big deal thing every year and I've done workshops there and stuff and from the perspective of a radical/punk/queer/gross/hesher/dumbass trans woman who's been exhausted for years by the way, dyke, queer and "trans" communities bend over backwards to be inclusive toward trans men without giving a single half fuck about trans women, it gets worse and worse every year. But even back then, it was pretty busy and multiple workshops were scheduled at a time. The friends I was with were going to some workshop that I don't remember anything about but lo and fucking behold, dude, somebody was literally doing a workshop called The Trans Punk Perspective!

I was like, uhhh, okay, I guess I'll see you all later, and stumbled up the stairs on shaky baby deer legs, terrified that everybody there would be so cool I'd get laughed out of the room for looking like a herb. But what the fuck was I gonna do, not go to this thing? So I went into this little room and sat in the back and the two women who were leading it passed around a zine that one of them had made specifically for the workshop and then spent the next hour making fun of each other. They were covered in tattoos and they both seemed kind of surprised that they were in charge of a workshop, and they both had weird hair and dumb glasses, and I found out later that Sybil was hella stoned and drunk. I didn't talk to her then but Anne Tagonist—who had written zines about being trans in the nineties and who basically is this smart wingnut who I look up to even though I don't really look up to anyone—she was totally there too, talking about anarchy and bikes.

But that was it. That was my sun-coming-out-from-behind-the-clouds revelation moment. I thought, hold up, I can dye my hair stupid colors and cut it weird, cuss a lot, be a fuckup, get tattoos and make zines and be trans? Are you... are you sure about this? Suddenly this whole other life was possible. I grew up and now I'm friends with the presenters. Alyssa told me that she did that workshop because she didn't know any other punk trans women except Sybil and she wanted to make a thing finally fucking happen and Sybil was agreed to do it, but then right before the workshop Sybil got nervous so she got all stoned and that's why the workshop ended up going off the rails and being a clusterfuck. But I guess that's the magic though, right? You can't kill it. And it worked—eight years later, I know hell of punker trans women! Who play in bands and mentor younger punk trans women and cultivate this sub-subculture or whatever. I guess my whole point of bringing this up is that I seriously literally owe everything cool that came up in my life to that dumb workshop they did in 2004. Punkers, man, bein' all stupid and saving lives. That shit is real.

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The second part of this column is that I want to tell you that I have a book coming out. I wrote a novel about this stuff. I mean, if you've been paying attention to this column for the last year, I have a lot of trouble shutting the fuck up about it, because I'm fuckin' stoked. Seriously. I wrote this novel about trans women for trans women and it's about this girl who is a borderline punker and about how hard it is to find a mentor and, if I may, I want to quote three hundred and fifty words from the 1970s classic of feminist psychology *Toward A New Psychology Of Women* by Jean Baker Miller.

"Over time, we can see certain characteristics in the writings of an oppressed group. Initially, many writers work to dispel the false ideas which have been purveyed about the group. Dispelling falsities is very valuable. Along with it, however, a tendency often emerges to 'prove' that the oppressed group is 'just as good as the so-called first rate people' and should be treated in the same way. In seeking to prove this, writers often accept the standards and values of the dominant group, either wittingly or unwittingly. They often assumed that the dominant group's method of advancing knowledge is the best of only method. Indeed, academic disciplines exert heavy pressure on everyone to believe this, and they tend to penalize and silence those who deviate from it.

Once the period of dispelling falsities is under way, the ability emerges to see the experience of the oppressed or "second-class people" in their own terms—and to see that these terms can open up a greater understanding not only of the second-class people, but of everyone. It then becomes clearer that the categories and even the words used by the dominant group are not appropriate. The words usually tend to systematically downgrade and obscure the experience of the dominant group. If writers search for more appropriate terms, they depart from the usual categories and assumptions. They then see the experience of the dominant group in a new light, in terms that can illuminate that experience as well as the total human experience.

This new scholarship leads to the recognition that the descriptions of the events in the lives of the subordinate group were inadequate, as were those used to describe the dominant group. [...] The close study of an oppressed group reveals that a dominant group inevitably describes a subordinate group falsely in terms derived from its own systems of thought. These same false categories guide the dominant group's explanations about itself. Once writers see the inadequacy of these terms, they have to find new ones. And once they begin to find new ones, they see that the systems of thought which contained such false terms are seriously flawed in their basic assumptions, which had previously defined everything."

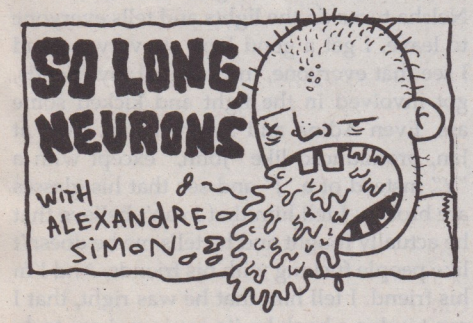
I'm obsessed with this. This seems so applicable to where trans women are at right now—there are hella trans memoirs and a bunch of trans fiction and, not to dork out, but the central thing about most trans stuff that's out there right now is that it's designed to explain trans people to cis people. It's about the fact that being trans is a priori interesting. This reifies cultural norms in which trans people are other or are less than—are in a place where we need to explain ourselves. But I've known trans women who've been saying otherwise for over a fuckin' decade and it feels like any day this shit is gonna bubble over.

I'm not saying I've solved it or anything—I may in fact have written a fucked up book that'll set trans women as a whole back a couple decades. I dunno. But I have this novel called *Nevada* coming out from Topside Press in April and it's about a trans woman who's smart but also a fucking catastrophe, who has an ill-conceived personal odyssey of shitty mentorship or something... It doesn't have much about her transition in it and all the sex in it is really bad so if you're looking for a book that explains trans people to you, this might not be it. I feel like I got to write this thing that I'd been wanting to read for fucking forever and it's weird and cool that Topside Press is letting me publish it and I'm not trying to be a capitalist asshole and advertise it here—if you wanna read it but you're broke and wanna trade or something, you can email me at imogen@keepyourbridgesburning.com. Seriously, let's talk—especially if you're in prison—I feel stoked that I get to do stuff in the tradition of the 2004 Trans Punk Perspective workshop at THC almost a decade ago.

Imagine if some kid was reading this right now and was like, fuck, nobody *still* ever talks about being a trans woman punker, I feel heck of lonely. How sick would that be!? Dude, email me if that's you. Let's hang out, I wanna come to your town. Don't get a tattoo of the transgender symbol. Trust me.

I'm gonna be touring on it from the beginning of March to the end of April and then again at the end of the summer I think, and if you wanna come and hang out, that would fuckin' rule. Tour dates are probably at www.topsidepress.com/nevada, although I'm writing this a couple months in advance so if that doesn't work, y' know, I bet you can work google.. I'm also trying to get RVIVR to play my reading in Olympia. How rad would that be? Haha. What the fuck. Book punk. Gross.

But I guess that's all I want to say. Next month I'll shut the fuck up about myself (yeah right) and write about bands. And maybe tumblr? The kids are using tumblr right now in a manner that is punk as fuck, if you didn't know. Also, check out this band Ragana, trust me.



The other day, fairly drunk in my room, I did something that I hadn't done in a while: sent some simple random questions to a band for no other reason than the fact that I had been playing their songs on repeat. That band is Big Eyes, the best thing to happen to gritty, catchy, melodic rock and punk since the Fastbacks. Their records have been spun a fuckload at the *Ratcharge* HQ over the past few months, and if you haven't heard them yet, I strongly suggest blasting their spring/fall hit "Since You're Gone" as loud as possible, right now. Thanks to Kate for answering my questions in just a couple of days.

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Big Eyes reminds me a lot of the Fastbacks. Were you influenced by 'em when you started jamming?

I actually got into the Fastbacks a little after I started Big Eyes, when people started telling me that we sounded similar to them. Now that I live in Seattle, I'm an even bigger fan. I think they're a great band and they're definitely a big influence on us.

Where were you all livin' when the band started? Do you think you would have played the same music if you lived in another city?

I was living in Crown Heights, Brooklyn when I started Big Eyes. It's not a great neighbourhood, but compared to lots of other parts of Brooklyn it isn't so bad. A lot of people that live in NYC live in apartments, but I was lucky enough to live in a house. Most of my roommates were musicians as well, so we had a band practice room. That definitely made it a lot easier (and cheaper!) to focus on writing and recording songs. I grew up in a beach town about 30 miles outside of NYC, so I was always very drawn to the city. There's not a lot going on in the suburbs musically, but there's always a million things going on in the city. I was heavily influenced by New York bands and the New York attitude ("state of mind" ha ha!). Everything about NYC is straightforward and aggressive, and that comes out in the music it spawns. I think if I grew up in California or somewhere else, I'd be a pretty different person. But just because we are based out of Seattle now doesn't mean we're becoming a grunge band, ha ha.

What do you like to read?

I mostly read science fiction and band biographies. Recently I read *On the Road With the Ramones* the book put together by their longtime manager Monte Melnick. That book was a fun read...so many stories and facts that I didn't know about one of my favorite bands of all time. They really dug deep. I highly recommend it to fans of the Ramones. Right now, I'm finishing up the *Xenogenesis* series by Octavia Butler. She's an amazing writer; there are some really freaky concepts in her stories, but somehow they're easily relatable. She and Ray Bradbury are my favorite science fiction authors.

Do you tour often? Are you trying to make a living off of Big Eyes, or is it more of a part-time thing?

Big Eyes tours very often. We're a full time band. We moved to Seattle in September 2011 and between then and September 2012 we toured for at least a good six out of those twelve months (split up into a few different tours). It'd be nice to make a living off of Big Eyes, but that's definitely not my main motivation.

What's the worst thing that could happen to you while on stage?

One time, a couple of years ago, we played at Asbury Lanes in New Jersey, and both my guitar and amp wouldn't work for some reason. I tried someone else's guitar thinking that was the problem, but my amp still didn't work. That was so frustrating! I've broken a string during the first song of a set a bunch of times, and it's really annoying when people bump into you and knock the microphone into your teeth. I'm pretty small and a lot of people don't realize their strength and bump into me while I'm playing.

You're gonna tour Europe in 2013, right? What are your expectations? What would be the worst case scenario for the tour to be a disaster?

We hopefully should be touring Europe in the fall of 2013. I don't really know what to expect because we've never played in Europe (I've never been there at all), but I think it will be awesome. We are very excited to go there. The worst case scenario? I don't wanna think about that! Things can always go wrong. One of my biggest fears would be for us to flip our van or something. That seems so scary. Or if we lost our passports. Yikes!

I see you're selling a shirt with a drawing of a cat. Would you eat a cat if it was the only thing available?

I eat cat regularly. Just kidding. Have you seen the Screaming Females video where Marissa eats cats? Ha ha, that's a good one.

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That's it for this month. Expect more short interviews in future columns as eating baguettes and collecting berets is killing all of my time these days. Just one last thing: I'm looking for a copy (or better, a download link) of a movie called *Of Flesh and Blood*, which was directed by Jeff Mentges (singer of No Trend) in the early '90s. Any leads would be greatly appreciated. (ratcharge@gmail.com)

So we make our way up to Avenue A, and decide to go to this bar called "Psychomungo". Actually, I decide. It is a sort of punk rock/

biker dive. It has a great jukebox with bands on it like the Candy Snatchers, Electric Frankenstein, and the Ramones, but more importantly, it has Nelsha. Nelsha is the bartender. She is this cute girl who worked at this studio where we recorded a demo, and, I knew she'd give us free beer. And I was right. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

"Hey George," I hear some girls call my name as the four of us are walking on Avenue A toward that pitcher of free beer. I turn and look and see these punk girls with funny colored hair. There is Adina, with the blue hair, Steph, with the new blue-black look for her, Karin, with the bleach blonde look, and Gunvor, Karin's sister, with I think some red or pink in her hair. They all look very cute. And very punk. One of them is even carrying a lunch box. And they have all these patches all over their clothes. Of bands. Like Vice Squad and Casualties and Dick Army. And I think three of them are wearing short little school-girl skirts. Wow.

So, anyway, we all decide to go to the bar together, and I hope like hell that Nelsha will give us all free beer. All eight of us.

We get into the place, and it is just how I remembered it. Exactly. Down to the Furious George sticker on the tap pump. The place hadn't changed at all. And it had been a whole day since I'd been there. Wow.

Anyway, I introduce Nelsha to all my friends, and she says hi to everyone. Then she gives me a couple of pitchers of beer, for free, and I kinda tip her big time. She rules. So we all get down to some serious drinking. Me, My Future Ex-Wife, Tracy, Jan, pronounced like "John," except with a "Y" instead of a "J", Adina, Steph, Karin, and her sister, Gunvor.

As we continue to drink more and more, Jan, pronounced like "John," except with a "Y" instead of a "J", beings to speak with Adina and Steph, and realizes that punks aren't as stupid as he thought. He actually begins to like them and is happy he is here hanging out with us. I tell him that you can't judge a book by its cover. He tells me that goes both ways. I tell him, "right".

So I'm sitting at the bar, drinking a lot, and kinda talking to whoever is around. And behind me, I hear Karin and Gunvor and My Future Ex-Wife and Tracy talking to someone. I turn around and they are talking to some little guy with like curly hair and who is wearing like a sweat jacket and jeans. He is telling them that they are trendy little fucks, who probably listen to Space Hog and like alternative music. They laugh at him and insult him back. He tells them that they are stupid Generation X'ers, and know nothing. Then he asks the girls what high school they go to and tells them that he is surprised that any of them can think.

Asshole. But I ignore him.

It is bad for me to get into fights. Very bad.

I should let these girls fend for themselves. And it seemed to me that they were doing a great job.

***

So I continue to drink more and more and hear this prick insulting the girls even more. I figure I shouldn't say anything, 'cause this guy is drunk and looking for a fight. And if I were to fight him, I'd probably kill him. And that'd suck.

So, I just listen to this guy go on and on. Then I get an idea. If I act gay, and try to pick him up, maybe he'll get turned off and leave the bar. So I get off my bar stool and in my best Frankenfurter/Tim Curry voice, I say to the guy, "Hey, you have a nice ass." He looks at me, and then says, "Meet me in the bathroom in five minutes." Everyone laughs. I tell him that he doesn't have to be so crude, throw my head back and walk away.

No luck. The guy continues to pick on the girls and they are becoming visually upset. So, I walk over to the jukebox, put on a Candy Snatchers song, and walk back to the group. I hear the guy tell Tracy that she is like a mother hen and ugly. So I say to the guy, again in my best Frankenfurter/Tim Curry voice, "Well, at least she's not balding and gnatty." Then I walk away. He follows.

"What's wrong with being balding, big nose?" says the guy to me two inches from my face.

Uh oh. I think I hit a sore spot.

"I think I touched on a nerve, huh?" I say to the balding and gnatty guy. "Yeah, big nose," he says to me. "Big nose?" I say. "Listen," I say, "why don't you just leave the girls alone?"

"What, big nose? I can't hear you. Did you say something?"

I tell him that I don't want to fight, that violence is bad and let's just drop the whole thing. He says "fuck you" and hits me in the head. Hard. With a fist.

Okay. I remain calm and don't hit him back even though I begin to feel the flesh around my eye swell. I figure I better not fight, or I'm gonna kill this guy, then I'll get the chair.

He hits me again. Harder. Right in my big nose. Blood starts to come out.

Again, calmly, I tell the guy he doesn't want to do this and to just walk away. With that he knees me in the balls and hits me again in the face. Obviously he is doing this because he was angry about the girls abusing him and had to fight someone. That someone being me. This time I kinda flip. I yell, "I'm gonna fucking kill you" and grab him.

At this point, everyone in the bar hears what is going on and My Future Ex-Wife sees that I am about to engage in Mortal Kombat with this jerk. I gonna finish this guy, rip his fucking head off. Pull his skeleton outta his body and wear it on my jacket like my pal Ryan does with his skeleton. I am about to swing and My Future Ex-Wife jumps in front of me.

"No!," she yells, and won't let me fight the guy. I try to swing at him, but My Future Ex-Wife gets in my way. She tells me she won't let me fight and that's that. My eye is swollen up, my nose is bloody and I tell My Future Ex-Wife that I am gonna fucking kill this guy. But she won't let me and I was not about to fight with My Future Ex-Wife. She'd kill me. So I back off and keep yelling at the guy.

But then the fun starts. It turns out the guy has two friends with him, little MTV wannabe jerks and they jump in to fight My Future Ex-Wife who is trying to protect me. Then Karin and Gunvor jump in to stop them, as well as Jan, pronounced like "John," except with a "Y" instead of a "J", and Tracy.

So all I see in the dark bar are fists and stools and bottles flying. And lots of noise. It is an out and out bar brawl and the whole time My Future Ex-Wife is holding me back from getting involved. I look over and see Karin and Gunvor kicking and beating the shit out of the MTV guys with their lunch boxes and boots. The whole time their little ponytails are flying around and they look so cute in their little girl skirts. Then I look over and see something else.

Amazing.

Jan, pronounced like "John," except with a "Y" instead of a "J", and Tracy are beating the shit outta some guys as well.

Fucking Jan. Jan, pronounced like "John," except with a "Y" instead of a "J".

Wow. Jan is pounding on this guy, and his fists are getting all bloody. And still he keeps hitting the guy. I hear someone yell to the guys to leave and I hear one of them cry, "I'm trying, I'm trying." Then Karin raises her fist in the air with a clump of hair. She fucking scalped on of the guys.

Meanwhile, I'm just standing there watching. At this point, I have given up trying to convince My Future Ex-Wife to let me jump in and was just watching the amazing show through the one eye I still had open. Finally, it kinda winded down, with the guys being thrown out of the bar and the little balding and gnatty guy yelling that he'd find me and kill me.

Take a number.

So we are all standing around the bar and Nelsha turns on the lights and tells everyone to leave. I get a good look at everyone and I see that everyone, meaning all my friends, got involved in the fight and kicked some ass. Even Adina and Steph. I look over at Jan, pronounced like "John," except with a "Y" instead of a "J" and see that his glasses are broken. I tell him that I can't believe that he actually fought and he tells me he doesn't like people fucking with his friends. And I'm his friend. I tell him that he was right, that I can't judge a book by its cover and am truly touched.

He is manly. Even if he dresses like a commie.

Then the conversation turns to how

everyone kicked ass and I feel kinda left out. But I also feel a deep sense of friendship and of being loved. My friends are the fucking best. Tracy tells everyone that no one is gonna fuck with her Jan, or her friends George and My Future Ex-Wife. Karin and Gunvor express the same sentiment. I almost cry.

"You a loozer," says some girl with a heavy German accent. I look over and see some girl at the other end of the bar. She has short blondish hair and looks really tough. "You a loozer," she repeats. I ask her if she is talking to me as I cover my eye and nose with wet napkins I got from Nelsha.

"Yes, loozer," she says, "I am talking to you." I ask her why she is calling me a "loozer" with a "z". She tells me that I am a "loozer" and a "sissy" because I let five girls fight for me. That she has never seen one man protected by five girls. I explain that these are my friends and has she ever heard of friends? She continues to call me a "sissy" and "loozer," saying that in her country I'd be beaten for not being a man. That I should be ashamed. That how could I walk around being such a sissy. Karin, Gunvor, My Future Ex-Wife, Adina, Steph, Tracy and even Jan try to yell at her, but I tell them to let her talk.

So she goes on for like three minutes calling me a "sissy" and trying to start a fight, but finally gets bored and leaves. By this point, Nelsha is getting really pissed and asks us all to leave. She says she doesn't need another fight and I don't blame her.

As we put our jackets back on, the "loozer" girl comes walking back in. Karin and Gunvor explain that her name is Doritos or something, and that she is the head of some squat. No wonder she smelled.

Anyway, Doritos tries to start a fight again with Karin and Gunvor, but they don't bite. She goes on about them protecting a man, and how stupid that is. They explain that they would protect a woman too, that they protect their friends. Doritos doesn't get it. "But he is a sissy", she exclaims. Finally she leaves again, and then we do as well. What a fucking night. I learned a lot about friendship.

So there I am standing by the side of the road having been called a sissy by some putz in a SUV. So what do I do? Live with it. I'm too old for this shit. Actually, I just haven't made enough female these days. Yet.

Take my Life, Please.

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Endnotes:

1. Speaking of Ingrid And The Defectors, their new E.P., "Mod-Retro Revolution" rocks. Good pop punk ala Debbie Harry meets Chrissy Hynde meets Ronnie Spector at a Ramones concert. I love these tunes, especially "We Are The Enemy". Very clever. Very cool.
2. www.georgetabb.com

I just made coffee that I sweetened with maple syrup (tryna be fancy), and the supermarket-grade soy milk (still haven't settled into cow's milk even though I've slipped up far too many times to be vegan anymore) turns the liquid a kind of gunmetal grey. Drink this grey anyway (if that gets subbed to US-English, I'm going to strike; the "a" spelling is far too positive). Oh perfunctory beverage, take my mind off of the blandness and help me slip into recollections, record collections. We did, as I mentioned in my previous column, go to America, and now we are back. Everyone has their own ways of navigating a city and the tried'n'tested "food spots, record spots, museums, galleries, repeat 'til your feet hurt" one is by no means novel, but, stomach ache notwithstanding, it has to be the best.

Getting to meet and hang out with friends of friends and stamp out the "of friends" bit over huge meals; even busting the myth that I've been peddling since that horrendous red sauce-in-a-tortilla aberration in Bakersfield, that "South Asian food in America sucks," by way of a legitimately killer thali in Jackson Heights. So now I'm surrounded by bits'n'pieces brought home from this trip that I'm not ready to file away; from the trip we just came back from, that, owing to Christmas, now feels like a long time ago. Prospective moves and future thoughts, life changes, what-have-you, have got me thinking about the amount of things I own and what I would do with them should I one day wake up and leave with only a bag full of mostly essentials. Across the hall, my housemate is doing the same with an unwieldy collection of coats. It's a natural rhythm. Of course, this trip was no different in terms of bringing home a new selection of the self-same bits'n'bobs that I'd need to shed, so it's a circuitous argument. I will never be a minimalist.

Some objects, then, again, only slightly less ephemeral than food:

London Zoo – *Receiving End* – A 7" single I've wanted to get hold of in-thee-flesh for a long time. Came out on Zoom in 1979, after the Blunt Instrument got a new guitarist, went new wave and changed their name. Perfectly affable power pop smeared with a hint of angst to keep things zingy. Veiled resentment obscured by melody. "I don't like you very much, but I've got problems spending my time." Just a total jam, found for a few bucks, hidden behind the endless Blondie singles at the Lower East Side Academy records.

Kurraka – Demo tape – An awesome gift from a new friend. This is a four track hail of unhinged, reverberating rage from four women. Criaturas alumnus. It's described as raw punk a lot, but has a kind of a swing to it, particularly the song "Hermanas de las Oscuridad," which may not even be on this tape, but I can't stop listening to the mp3, so either way, oh wow yessss. Grinding bass, pummelling drums, a guitar potentially strung with the dried out banjo strings of many dead dudes. I am gross, but this is sick. Viva el Ruido indeed.

Fisticuffs Bluff/Carbomb split – Through our various record shop schleps, I developed a hypothesis in response to the sheer scale of emo cast-offs languishing in dollar bins in even the most "curated" of stores. Something about message boards. I suppose much of it is strictly more screamo than emo for the most part. The lines were never that clear, but you know what I mean. I was always too busy trying to trick myself into self-hating dudes' skinny pants—both literally and metaphorically—than taking sides over whether Anomie or Ivich were better. And I got out of that game before the internet got fast enough for people to download everything ever made and refer to actual music as "skramz." Jesus Christ. But yes, while this sort of thing has been out of style for a few years, only now comes the tipping point where a pile of records once seen as covetable, and then destined for Discogs, is now resigned to the dusty corners of these shops. And so the whole microeconomy, revealing its sorry self as a sham, is somehow comfortable or satisfying, even though it only exists because we agree on what things are "worth" for a moment.

The trouble is, beyond and mixed in with a lot of that hollow tenth rate squawking, as derivative as it was functionally sexist, there was also a lot of totally great music, which shouldn't, by rights, be written off in the name of anti-nostalgia. Plus, I'm sure that during the time period I was talking about, we were already on the fourth incarnation of emo/screamo anyway. It seems like the earlier, the better in terms of "still stands up as great today," and bands like Fisticuffs Bluff are a case in point. Totally unhinged and rabid frustrato sounds from singer Summer, that maybe you wonder what she would do next (answer: join the Aislers Set). I got their records at Amoeba and Heaven Street for two dollars, although I never did find that Angel Hair split! Finding what were once "big wants" of folks five years ago (anyone remember the *All the Presidents Men* comp? Post Marked bloody Stamps?! The former is sick, the latter were mostly shit) marked down to a few quid is funny. But a select few gems of the quality stuff that did get classified as emo then is, on a contemporary listen, just really good, inventive hardcore, and this is no exception. (That said, just do

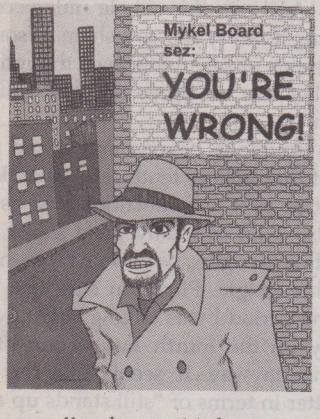
yourself a favour and don't try checking if Orchid still stand up, because, oh my, you'll regret it.) Cross your heart and cash in.

***State of the Union* compilation** (Dischord records) – A fair old chunk of pretty dire mid-period Dischord "progression" on here, one strum too many in the *acoustic* department and a couple of terrible offences against punk, despite the best intentions from Kingface and Thorns, but it is interesting to place some of Fugazi's excesses in context. And I love this type of thing! I picked it up at a shop close to Academy on the Lower East Side, along with that dayglo Josie Cotton *Johnny Are You Queer?* 12"—because I like to mix things up. If you can get through "Ameri-dub" from Scream, then it's worth it for the second best One Last Wish song, "Burning in the Undertow," (the best is "Loss Like A Seed" and I will fight you for a difference in opinion on that one).

Honourable mentions: TNT single! *Swiss Punk Now*! *Dag with Shawn*! Swiz Punk Now! (Sorry that was terrible) Neats single! Huggy Bear *Main Squeeze*!

Afterword:

1. I put out the second issue of *Langdon Olgar II*—it's a zine/journal/artists' book about gender, sexism and the body. It's full-colour, riso-printed and I'm way stoked on it. You can get it at www.wearemusclehorse.com.
2. One Life One Throb, GT is the band that would drive 600 miles to play a show to a man and his horse.
3. El Panzon in Brixton. I've found heaven in taco form.



"Children suffer the world that adults create for them and try their best to adapt to it; in time, usually, they will replicate it."
—Michel Houellebecq

Bzzzzz: Drone 593 launched. Passing 120 miles from Pakistan border. Over.

Bzzzzz: Roger, following on radar. 593 approaching target. Satpix show small house. Over.

Bzzzz: Roger, reaching target in 5... 4... 3... 2... 1... Bingo! Over.

Bzzzz: Radar reports slight miss. Hit family wedding party, target 2 miles West Southwest. Over.

Bzzzz: Got it. Plus two West Southwest. Will launch Drone 594.

FLASH to Newtown Connecticut: Adam Lanza shoots his way into an elementary school. Twenty-six people die— 20 of 'em kids. The president flies in... hugs family members... TV spends days covering teary relatives... casting blame. Pundits cry out from here to NRA.

USA Today writes (in a horrible run-on sentence): *Several hours before Adam Lanza shot and killed 20 children and six adults Friday in an attack on a school in Newtown, CT, a 36-year-old man a half-a-world away in China attacked 22 children at a primary school. None of the kids died. The reason? The man in China had only a knife*

The NRA answers: *The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun*

The NRA also blames the media, saying news organizations sensationalize mass murders. In an equally horrible run-on sentence they say,

"How many more copycats are waiting in the wings for their moment of fame from a national media machine that rewards them with wall-to-wall attention and a sense of identity that they crave?"

That rage-against-the-media-machine has strange net-fellows. Something ostensibly posted by Morgan Freeman makes the *Facebook* rounds:

It's because of the way the media reports it. Flip on the news and watch how we treat the Batman theater shooter and the Oregon mall shooter like celebrities. Dylan Klebold and Eric Harris are household names, but do you know the name of a single victim of Columbine? Disturbed people who would otherwise just off themselves in their basements see the news and want to top it by doing something worse...Why children? Because he'll be remembered as a horrible monster, instead of a sad nobody.

CNN's article says that if the body count "holds up," this will rank as the second deadliest shooting behind Virginia Tech, as if statistics somehow make one shooting worse than another...

Fox News has plastered the killer's face on all their reports for hours. Any articles or news stories that focus on the victims and ignore the killer's identity? None that I've seen yet... Congratulations, sensationalist media, you've just lit the fire for someone to top this and knock off a day care center or a maternity ward next.

Someone else posts that the message was fake. Or at least not from Morgan Freeman. It doesn't matter. It's what a lot of people think.

A Mexican pal of mine suggest that police profile white males since *most of the mass shootings in America come at the hands of white men*... Follow them like the airports and CIA follow Muslims... like NYC cops target black or Latino guys for *Stop and Frisk*. My Mexipal suggests that WHITE MEN need some targeting, at least an extra look when they hang around school yards.

Then there's *salon.com*. They point out the important fact that the shooter was a vegan. This is a tantalizing but somewhat irrelevant point. There is no report of the assassin actually trying to EAT his prey.

The Huffington Post prints an article by the mother of a mentally ill child called, *I Am Adam Lanza's Mother.*

She's not really, as Adam offed his mother. But she has a son, Michael, who she says is like him:

I live with a son who is mentally ill. I love my son. But he terrifies me.

A few weeks ago, Michael pulled a knife and threatened to kill me and then himself, after I asked him to return his overdue library books. His seven and nine year old siblings knew the safety plan — they ran to the car and locked the doors before I even asked them to. I managed to get the knife from Michael, then methodically collected all the sharp objects in the house into a single Tupperware container that now travels with me. Through it all, he continued to scream insults at me and threaten to kill or hurt me.

In the rest of article, the woman explains how so many mentally ill people are left untreated. That can lead to behavior like that of the shooter, or any other kid who goes wild!

Only AFTER some kid hurts someone else can they do something... and that something is jail.

Says the writer:

It seems like the United States is using prison as the solution of choice for mentally ill people. According to Human Rights Watch, the number of mentally ill inmates in U.S. prisons quadrupled from 2000 to 2006, and it continues to rise -- in fact, the rate of inmate mental illness is five times greater (56 percent) than in the non-incarcerated population.

With state-run treatment centers and hospitals shuttered, prison is now the last resort for the mentally ill — Rikers Island, the LA County Jail and Cook County Jail in Illinois housed the nation's largest treatment centers in 2011.

There's more: Some TV Talking Heads blame the shootings on slasher films and Quentin Tarantino. I'm surprised no one's blamed it on tobacco.

Joel Randell, who, as far as I know, is just some guy, tweeted, *Going after the NRA and assault weapons only treats the symptoms. We need to treat the root: the American cultural psyche.*

BINGO!

FLASH BACK TO AFGHANISTAN: Reuters reports two marines face criminal charges. They were photographed pissing on the bodies of dead Afghanis. Is that against the law? Nope. Piss where you please. So what are the criminal charges? **"Posing for unofficial photographs with human casualties."** Get it? It's not the pissing that's the problem. It's that someone took a picture of it. Piss on whoever you want, just make sure you shoot the photographer.

In Vietnam, vets cut the ears off *enemy* corpses as souvenirs. Seems logical to me... at least American. No, they didn't eat them.

Maybe they were vegans.

In Iraq it was the tortures in Abu Ghraib... and smiling soldiers in front of corpses.

Americans have killed more innocent people in Afghanistan and Iraq than in a thousand Newtown Connecticuts. And it hasn't stopped.

It's not (only) the mass media that glorifies killers, it's America itself. What is Veterans Day, if not a day in celebration of killers? We can feel sorry for vets. Many have been railroaded into the service to avoid jail or deportation. But they are NOT heroes.

America has been killing people since it's birth. For the last 100 years it's been MASS murder. In this century (and most of the last), not one of those murders has been justified. The US hasn't been on the right side of any war since 1949.

Americans are the most blood-thirsty people in the world. A bunch of white guys sentence Charles Taylor to 50 years in jail for cutting off people's hands in Liberia. Who's gonna sentence ***our boys in uniform?*** And the professional murderers in American prisons whose job it is to kill people (often wrongly) to prove that killing is wrong? We're so PUNISHMENT oriented we have more people in prison... a higher percentage of the population... than any country on earth, including Russia or China.

America's bloodlust isn't in slasher movies. It's in war movies. It isn't in glorifying crazy child-murderers. It's in glorifying cold, calculated, paid-by-the-government child-murders.

It's not the guns, mental illness, or Fox news. It's AMERICA. It's the culture that tells every one "if you don't like it, KILL IT!" We worship killers. Have national holidays for them. We travel halfway around the world to kill people who've done nothing to us. That is America, the worst world plague in almost a century.

Listen America, you pathetic excuse for a civilized country, you want a REASON for so many mass murderers? Don't look to pundits, the NRA, Quentin Tarantino, or the media. Look in the fuckin' mirror! You'll find the reason.

***

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or blog viewers (mykelsblog.blogspot.com/) will get live links and a chance to post comments on the column. Your zines, CDs/records, and... er... *private videos...* can and should be sent to me at: Mykel Board, POB 137, Prince Street Station, New York NY 10012]

-->This is from a punkrock pal o' mine who's stuck living in his car. I even gave him $5!

Here's old Bob, he wasted his life with punkrock, he's really hardcore. He carried the torch, he suffered and martyred so that you might rock, he was a true-believer to the point of idiocy and now he's homeless and broke and can't get a decent job, but he hates all the right political things and cares about puppies and babies.....please help him out..

Sad and pathetic, but thats pretty much the truth.....I just keep pricking my finger when I try to pin the punkrock hero badge on myself. Can you help? Cheers!

Details at: http://igg.me/p/170207/x/494862

-->*Life imitates entertainment imitating life dept:* *The Utne Reader* reports on a 300-acre "hunting ranch" outside San Antonio Texas. The site streams live video from a platform with a computer, a video camera, and a 22-caliber Remington rifle. When an animal wanders into view, users take aim with their mouse and a remote control device does the rest. For a few hundred dollars more, the cyber-but-real corpse can be sent to a local taxidermist for stuffing and delivery.

-->*Vegans strike again dept:* I found an old issue of *Censorship News* that had an interesting report on a **San Francisco Institute of Art** exhibition. Actually, it was only a planned exhibition, canceled because of a video called DON'T TRUST ME. The video showed animals "being killed by a single blow to the head." The C.N. analysis is perfect:

*The images in **Don't Trust Me** are deeply disturbing, though probably less so than videos of animal abuse distributed for advocacy purposes by some of the animal rights organizations that protested the exhibition... Had the director stated that this work condemned practices of slaughtering animals... it seems unlikely that SFIA would have been subjected to the threats that caused it to cancel the exhibit.*

Sounds like "hate crime" laws. Don't punish the crime, punish the thought. Of course the victim, in either case, is dead.

-->Behind every pillar of evil is an American Christian dept: Conservative lawmakers in the Ugandan Parliament are pushing a bill that would make being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender a crime punishable by death.

After he initially endorsed the bill, Ugandan President Museveni responded to international outrage and promised to veto it. But there's intense pressure at home for him to follow his original endorsement.

The newest version of the bill would pit Ugandans against each other. Teachers, parents, and landlords — among others — could be criminally charged if they fail to denounce their students, children, and renters they know to be gay.

Homophobic fervor has been brewing for years in Uganda, but was most recently stepped-up by American, right-wing evangelicals. They traveled to the country to spread disinformation about homosexuality and encourage anti-gay legislation. They've been cheering this bill on and pushing for its passage. (Late news: The bill has been tabled by the Ugandan legislature.)

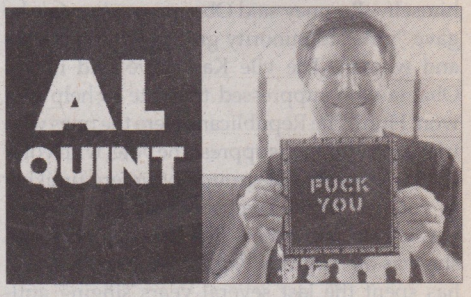
-->*Pray to Pay dept:* Also on the religious front *Church and State Magazine* reports that Washington DC had plans to provide $12 dollars to the CENTRAL UNION RESCUE MISSION. The mission "provides food and shelter to the homeless, but only if those served attend Christian religious services-- once for each benefit. Clearly a $12 million violation of the separation of church and state... as well as the general freedom to worship (or not) as you see fit." As of this writing, the grant is still up in the air.

-->*Pay to help dept:* The magazine REASON reports that a 10 year old girl wanted to raise money for the Japanese tsunami victims. She decided to sell cookies and lemonade in front of her home in Miami Beach. The city government, however, refused to grant her an "occupational license" so she was unable to open her stand.

-->*You can kill 'em but you can't fuck 'em dept:* Germany has just banned sex with animals. The acts had been legal since 1969. The badguys, as are often the case, are "animal rightists" who say that animal sex, "forces animals to behave in ways that are inappropriate to their species."

Michael Kiok, the leader of a Zoophile group, has spearheaded opposition to the ban. "There are already laws against hurting an animal," he says. "Of course animals can show if they want to have sex. They can show if they are hungry or want to exercise."

Christian—and vegan—morality strikes again.



It's Eleven O'clock and Time for Karl Rove's Head to Explode*

(*with apologies to Monty Python)

I have to admit I've really been enjoying the past few months since Obama got re-elected. Not because I'm a great supporter of his—far from it. He continues to cave on economic issues, his record on civil liberties is far from exemplary and there's the small matter of the war still going on in Afghanistan, drone attacks in Pakistan and on it goes. I'll admit I voted for him and kind of hated myself in the morning for doing it. I stole that line, by the way—it's from Ring Lardner, Jr. when he was speaking before the House Un-American Activities Committee in 1947 and was asked if he'd ever been a member of the Communist Party. He said, "I could answer the question exactly the way you want, but if I did I would hate myself in the morning." Of course, there are many on the right who think voting for Obama *is* voting for a Communist and that the "Democrat"

Party as some disparagingly call it—and that dates back to the McCarthy era—is a repository for dangerous radicals (I wish!). And there are still the birthers who don't think he was born in this country or those who think he's a Muslim or Nazi or all of the above.

I thought about voting for Jill Stein, the Green Party candidate who ran for Governor of Massachusetts in 2002. I voted for her then because the Democrat, Shannon O'Brien, was a dreadful candidate. Unfortunately, that was when Mitt Romney won his one and only election (not counting the primary victories during the past campaign). Kind of like how I voted for Ralph Nader in 2000. I watched a documentary about him the other night called *An Unreasonable Man*. It's from 2006 and there were interviews with some people who call themselves leftists or progressives who were *pissed* about his candidacy, Eric Alterman from *The Nation* in particular. Never mind that Gore ran a poor campaign or that the election was stolen or that many Nader voters weren't going to vote for either of the major party candidates to begin with. Of course I would have rather had Gore in there than Bush. By the way, I recommend the documentary, although it's a bit long.

But the reason I've been enjoying the past few months is because conservatives' heads have been exploding ever since Election Day. Bitter, spitting out sour grapes—this is an angry bunch, starting with the vanquished candidate himself—Romney said Obama won because he gave "gifts" to minority groups, young people and women. The vile Karl Rove said it was Obama who suppressed the vote to help him won. Huh? The Republicans were the ones who tried everything to suppress the vote, with voter ID laws targeted at groups of voters unlikely to vote for them. Then there are second-rate, washed up performers like Victoria Jackson—she was on Saturday Night Live years ago and has spent the last several years singing anti-Obama songs while accompanying herself on a ukulele. She said she couldn't stop crying and that "America died" and said the "Democrat *(sic)* Party voted God out of their platform and blamed Christians for not showing up to vote.

You want to say to them, *you lost! Get over it!* And think about it—the right wing echo machine, from Fox to talk radio to various bloggers and "pundits" threw everything they had at them. The Supreme Court's lamentable Citizens United decision paved the way for unlimited campaign contributions by SuperPACS. Billionaires such as the Koch Brothers and casino bigwig Sheldon Adelson gave millions of dollars to Romney and other Republicans for ads rife with lies and distortions. And it didn't work. Obama got re-elected and the Democrats picked up seats in the Senate and House. I'm not saying that everything's going to change and be hunky-dory. I'm not that naive. But it's gratifying to see that the right's hate-filled invective was something of a failure.

So on 11:00 on election night, we saw the announcement that Obama had been re-elected. I think we were watching CNN or CBS or one of the more mainstream networks. After a few minutes, I decided to flip over to Fox "News" to see if there had been any on-air suicides yet. Well, while there weren't, there did seem to be a funereal tone. I remember when they ran a waving flag in the background of their logo or something like that for several years after 9/11. I was wondering if there would be a return of such imagery and it would be a flag flying at half-mast. Rove was on there and in complete denial. Even though Ohio had been called for Obama, he was saying that there was still a chance Romney could win it and offered some numbers he'd conjured up. That led Megyn Kelly (one of the FoxBlonde anchors) to say to him, "Is this just math that you do as a Republican to make yourself feel better or is this real?" I wonder if the Fox studio was later surrounded by teabaggers with tar and feathers, calling for Kelly's blood.

It doesn't matter that they lost—the teabaggers in the House still want to get rid of or gut every social program. Michele Bachmann already put forth legislation to repeal "Obamacare," even though it was upheld by the Supreme Court (barely). *Hello? Anyone home? You lost!*

The bigots and haters continue to dig in their heels. Maybe it's not the best example it's fresh in my mind—an acquaintance of mine mentioned to me this week that he saw a banner on a house in Haverhill, MA that said "Why do I have to press #1 for English in the United States?" I should mention that Haverhill has a large Latino population—the city is still mainly Caucasian, but the minority population has been growing at a faster rate. Now this sort of mentality is nothing new but it's telling where that banner showed up. Some years back, I was driving home and saw a bumper sticker that said the same thing. There was another sticker I saw that said, "Push '1' for English, Push '2' for Deportation." Subtle... There's even a snappy little country ditty called, "Press One For English by the husband/wife duo of Kay and Ron Rivoli.". Look it up on YouTube. Needless to say, that clip has gained quite a bit of popularity with the right-wing/anti-immigration crowd. If you get through the entire three-plus minutes you deserve a prize of some sort. When I saw the video, the first thing I noticed (well besides the predictable patriotic imagery and Ron's hideous fashion sense—trust me on that) was the way Kay pronounces certain words—like "lan-gweedge." Also a few times, she calls the lan-gweedge she wants everyone to speak "In-gleesh." Maybe she's trying to sing in an accent so the non-English speakers can understand it. I have to admit that the song is better than the corny "God Bless The USA," performed by chicken hawk (i.e. didn't serve in the military) Lee Greenwood. But that's like asking if you'd rather have a root canal or a catheter put in a sensitive spot.

****

Enough Of This Political Shit...

...Let's move on to the punk rock. Schizophrenic records, the long-standing label from Hamilton, ON, sent me a nice big package of their latest releases. TV FREAKS follow up their full-length with a stormin' four song 7". More rough-hewn garage-infused punk bash. It sounds like the speakers are going to blow for the cacophonous conclusion of "Upper Hand" and they show no let-up on the other three songs here. While the album had a bit of EDDY CURRENT jitter, that's not really noticeable here, except on "Freelancer," and that song sneaks in bit of a hook at the end. That track also has a few similarities with CAREER SUICIDE. "Identity Crisis" is dark and pounding before picking up the pace at the end. All in all, this is a concise and relentless statement.

HASSLER's 7" EP is a total ripper. They're just flat-out mean-sounding, plying thumping hardcore punk that has plenty of bottom end and mighty pissed-off sounding vocals. And they have more than a few bones to pick with life's irksome elements. That's an understatement--and I'd better give them a good review or prepare to suffer their wrath, as stated on "Nothing For Nothing": *"I read your blog, you fuckin' jerk/Waste of time, your friends are twerps/'You're not a punk, you're not hardcore'/ Clueless fuck/What's the point? What's the score?"* Just bruising and they're not novices, either—one or more of these guys were in the REPROBATES, who put out a good 7" on No Way around five years ago.

For something a bit different, there's the *Best of Turbo II* 7" from SAILBOATS ARE WHITE. Brash, face-grabbing noise/punk/damage concocted from guitar, bass, programmed drums and serious synth-mangling. It's not as "artsy" as that sounds, though—this is mainly visceral music with an experimental twist. This is a vinyl pressing of seven songs taken from a nine song 2008 recording and the band's history goes back to the early '00s.

Finally, there's the *Destroy Music, Start Your Own Band* compilation of Hamilton bands and it's dedicated to the memory of Imants Krumins. Imants passed away in 2011 and was a tireless supporter and passionate fan of punk (and other music), an endless fount of knowledge and an all-around nice guy. I was fortunate enough to meet him a couple of times and correspond with him a bit over the years. His spirit hovers over the whole thing, including some soundbites of him between songs. On to the musical contents—it's the typical mixed bag of inspired noise-making along with some less-memorable material—*real* hit and miss, a diverse assortment, not just sticking to one style, with all sorts of punk, hardcore, garage and straight rock represented.

As for the highlights, the aforementioned TV FREAKS and SAILBOATS ARE WHITE make solid showings. The Freaks song isn't as strong as the tracks on the new EP but it gets things off to a loud 'n rousing start. The two Sailboats songs are new recordings and continue with the band's noise-drenched attack. The ominous industrial clatter of SKULL SERVANT is intriguing, while BORN WRONG viciously burns through their one song with a raw hardcore-meets-garage attack. The bruising hardcore of HAYMAKER was sometimes a case of "a little goes a long way," but I do like their pummeling of SUICIDAL TENDENCIES "Memories Of Tomorrow" (their pair of songs were recorded in 2002). Not everything is great but the one thing that comes through with the whole package, especially the booklet, is a true DIY spirit. The people involved run a record store, run a label and put on shows and have been doing so since the '80s. On the back cover, it says "You Are The Scene" and, corny as it sounds, it's true. (Schizophrenic, 17 W. 4th St., Hamilton, ON L9C 3M2, CANADA, www.schizophrenicrex.com)

NO PROBLEM are also Canadian but from Calgary. On their new three song *Living In The Void* 7", it's more sturdy punk with plenty of oomph 'n punch in the arrangements and gritty vocals. Some of the guitar lines are almost surfy, giving a bit of a west coast flavor. Definitely a dark mood, lyrically—life's *travails*, chafing against convention and conformity. Timeless themes and delivered with a sound that's both assertive and tuneful. (Debt Offensive, debtoffensiverecs.bigcartel.com)

More Canadians, this time from Montreal—that would be TRUNCHEONS, with Janick and Matt from AFTER THE BOMBS and it's a somewhat different beast. Instead of the longer, epi-crust compositions of their former bands, these are short sharp shocks (sorry) of distorted DISORDER/CHAOS UK-style punk. Buzz-stun guitar with a whole lotta distortion and echo on Janick's throaty vocals. On the back of the record, it says "Models and musicians out of punk. Keep hardcore for the ugly and talentless." That's not really the case here. Sure, it's an ugly sound and they ain't virtuosos but this is one blistering racket. (Distort Reality, distortreality.storenvy.com)

MÜLLTÜTE are a German punk band with a trebly style that reminds me a bit of AMDI PETERSENS ARME and the REGULATIONS mixed together. In other words, there's something of a Danish bent here. Jabbing and thumping, along with a judicious amount of feedback. This is their second 7" and both this and their earlier, self-released 2011 EP are worth hearing. Yep, it's old school and, as I've said, there's been a burnout factor of late but these guys have an appealing sharpness. (HeartFirst: www.heartfirst.net/Band contact: boite1333@hotmail.com)

Closer to (my) home, BLOODKROW BUTCHER's *Anti War EP* is the first release with PJ on vocals, having moved out from behind the drum kit and it's another scorcher. His harsh vocals match the band's d-beat hardcore perfectly. Over time, BKB have stripped away the wall of distortion and opt for a loud but still-raw roar. Four of the five songs are speed-burners, but "Reject" has more of an anthemic punk flavor, punctuated by a singeing lead break. One of the best bands from these parts. (6 Wadleigh Place, Boston, MA 02127, www.side-two.com)

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We all know that Art is not truth. Art is a lie that makes us realize truth, at least the truth that is given us to understand. The artist must know how to convince others of the truthfulness of his lies. If he only shows in his work that he has searched, and re-searched, for the way to put over lies, he would never accomplish anything.

Pablo Picasso

Charles Drew was an American physician, surgeon and medical researcher who lived in the first half of the twentieth century. He perfected methods of preparing and preserving blood plasma that allowed for the centralized testing, collecting and storing of blood. The American Red Cross blood bank was created out of his work.

Charles Drew was also black. He regularly attended the annual free clinic at the John A. Andrew Memorial Hospital in Tuskegee, Alabama. Drew and three other black doctors drove to the 1950 Tuskegee clinic instead of flying. Exhausted from operating the night before, as well as driving all day and night with his fellow physicians, Drew lost control of the car around 8 a.m. on April 1. The three other doctors suffered only minor injuries despite the car careening into a field before somersaulting three times. Drew, his foot wedged beneath the brake pedal, sustained serious wounds, including mortal leg injuries, and was in shock and barely alive when ambulance attendants arrived. He was taken to Alamance General Hospital in Burlington, North Carolina where he was pronounced dead.

According to the story, Charles Drew bled to death because he was refused treatment, specifically a life-saving blood transfusion, at the southern hospital because he was black. And while this story might have expressed the truth of race relations in the United States in 1950, this was not the fact. Drew received "the very best of care" according to his fellow doctors, and was refused no medical attention according to his race. The story has become an urban legend, but it reveals the important distinction between truth and fact.

But that's outrageous! How can truth be distinct, even contrary, to fact? How can lies be used to tell the truth?

Funny thing is, we experience the reverse all the time.

We are handed bullshit facts to justify outright lies masquerading as "truth." The fact that black people commit more crimes than white people is used to bolster the "truth" that blacks are inherently criminal. The fact that black people have higher unemployment rates and greater dependence on welfare programs than white people is used to support the "truth" that blacks are inherently lazy. The fact that black people routinely register lower scores on IQ tests is used to confirm the "truth" that blacks are inherently stupid. The lie that black people are subhuman has been transformed into "truth" with a heavily skewed interpretation of certain facts; crime rates, unemployment statistics, welfare enrollment, IQ results, etc. So why not separate real truth entirely from mere facts, even use lies to tell the truth?

Facts and truth are not the same thing. Facts are not obvious; they are subject to interpretation. Truth is not self-evident; it needs to be experienced. Facts can be used to underpin lies, and lies can be used to reveal the truth.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@mac.com.

It's that time again. The time of year when I tell you all about my year. I started the year out freezing in some forest, my feeble attempt

at avoiding everything that felt terrible on New Year's Eve, only to have it follow me. You know, I'm just going to say it: I don't really like camping. I really like nature and being in the middle of nowhere, but at some point I just want to go inside.

This year has been boring. Or maybe it just feels boring because I've been feeling really bored for the past few weeks. The blah style depression. Lately I keep hanging out at my parents' house because it's warm and comfortable and they have food and cable, and I can't figure out if it's because I'm depressed or because I'm over it. I guess I just said I'm depressed. So. Anyway, the Bay Area feels like it's in a sleep cycle at the moment. You know what I mean? That period of time where it feels like all of the bands are breaking up and everyone is moving away and shit gets dull. Nathan of Displeasure left, thus ending Displeasure, one of my favorite bands. Also, just straight up, Nathan left, thus no more buddy to watch *Ab Fab*, go to shows and play dominos with. Livid ended (or was that last year?!), Opt Out ended, Uzi Rash ended, Alabaster Choad ended, American Splits ended.

I had a thirtieth birthday that I wished to be a rager in my honor, but it ended up just being a show. A really good show, but definitely not the mega birthday blow out I wanted. But then I remembered that I'm kind of an anti-social asshole, and then wondered why I would think people would come out in droves to party with me.

We (Stillsuit) put out a tape, made a bunch of t-shirts and went on tour. I got home after a month and went straight to Olympia to practice with another band. Collectively I went to Olympia so many times this year that people both in the Bay Area and in Olympia thought that I had moved there (to Olympia).

I went to the Grand Canyon. I drove there with my sister and as we hit the desert; we both remembered how much we hate hot weather and that maybe it was a misstep to go to the desert at the height of July. But it ended up being really cool because there were lightning storms the entire time we were there, which not only made the temperature drop to the seventies rather than the nineties, but it also looked totally nuts because you'll be, like, standing on a ridge in blaring sunlight and then there is a this raging storm right in front of you but you're not in it.

In the spring I was part of a thing for Girls Rock Camp where we played a kind of Jeopardy-style version of Name That Tune. We made a team called "The Punks" featuring members of Stillsuit, Displeasure, Neon Piss and Alex Turner (the individual, not the band) and were really obnoxious about it, like deteriorating into throwing beer cans at each other and crowd surfing by the end of the night at a supposed "family event." We got to pick a celebrity contestant to join our team. A bunch of people wanted the KFOG DJ, but I whined until we ended up with Tabitha Soren, thus colliding middle school dreams with adult pop culture fascination, and it all felt really surreal.

Stillsuit played a show at Sugar Mountain where there was some jackass getting in my face and taking pictures with blinding flashes while we were playing. It had been a terrible day, and as per usual, I was in a foul mood, and who the fuck was this kid? I attempted to punch him but only managed to give him the finger mid-song. It didn't stop him. He later came up to apologize, having gotten wind that we were not down with it, and when I told him that he was pretty fucking bad at catching a hint, he said he thought that was my "shtick." What am I? A fucking cartoon character? Maybe.

My hardcore band Mind Cemetery played a show for the first time in, like, a year, which was cool 'cause playing hardcore is just really fun, but then I was so sore I couldn't move for, like, three days. Maybe this classifies me as old? The show was at a place called RCA, which is a squat that is always really fun to play. They are constantly on the verge of eviction, which is lame for so many reasons. Man that place is fun. In other news of places that are really fun to go to shows, RIP Bowling Alley shows due to some fights breaking out or so I heard. Thrillhouse moved its shows back down to the basement, which is a major improvement on cramped living room shows. Jam City is pretty cool and lives on. Taking field trips to San Jose for shows is really cool.

On that show note, this year Permanent Ruin slayed, Displeasure slayed, Weird TV slayed, American Splits slayed, Death Drive slayed, Hysterics slayed, No Statik slayed, Crude Thought slayed, Weakwick slayed, Fuck Detector slayed, La Llorona slayed, Tips for Twat slayed, VHS slayed, Sewn Leather slayed, Uzi Rash slayed, Replica slayed, ESG slayed, Culture Kids slayed, Grass Widow slayed, Gag slayed, Index slayed, Broken Water slayed, Needles slayed, CCR Headcleaner slayed, Alabaster Choad slayed, Relay for Death slayed, Fucking Dyke Bitches slayed, Twerps slayed, T.I.T.S. slayed, Saint Lorena slayed, Mugwort slayed, Sloth slayed, Missy slayed…probably forgetting so much shit. I always do.

Shoppers had a killer record but were such a snore live. I was into that Rape Revenge 7" from a couple years back, and I finally saw them, and they were kind of shitty/annoying live; the singer went into this rant about how we shouldn't celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. because he was working with the government or some such bullshit. It's like, read a fucking book, get your facts straight. God and I saw Erase Errata, and they're like a bar band now or something. Every time I got excited about a song, I would quickly realize it was an old one. I managed to not be blacked out by the time Limpwrist hit the stage for the first time in forever. The pit was so rough (either that or I'm out of touch), I was convinced my legs would break, I ended up on the stage, and then I ended up wedged behind a PA speaker. I missed Lydia Lunch because I was too busy sitting on my ass and feeling anxious (in my defense it was really cold outside). And while I'm not into White Horse (cookie monster vocals are just not my thing), I ended up in a basement in Minneapolis where they were playing and, fuck, it was amazing. I always thought that when I got bored with the Bay Area that I would move to Chicago, but now Minneapolis has risen in the ranks.

In news of me hanging out in my bedroom alone and constantly keeping busy, I put out a solo tape called Infinity Bums. I wrote a zine on stalking that I only made ten copies of (still got five left). I got really into Metallica, Megadeth, Guns N' Roses and Van Halen (Diamond Dave years), along with developing a huge obsession with Slash and now spend a lot of time trying to learn how to shred, but everything I do is kind of weird and incompetent, so you can imagine how that goes. I also have been watching so much, too much, shitty TV. I think it's because I'm feeling increasingly alienated and resentful and annoyed by the "outsider art" scene that so thoroughly surrounds me, so my reaction is to attempt the opposite direction.

And as everyone does, the world across winter hit and I just started a ton of new bands. One consists of me, another guy and a table full of pedals. We don't have a name yet. That kind of jam is something that is really fun to play but so boring to watch (I'm sure). Started a band with Lily of Grass Widow and Max of Uzi Rash. It's called Wet Drag. We have three complete songs and a show booked. Started a band with Tobi and Layla called GirlSperm. I joined a band called Sex Stains. Continued on with Stillsuit and Knife in the Eye.

Lisa Carver did some weird Yoko Ono thing at my house that had been super built up. In our heads it was going to be this mind blowing, crazy thing and then it actuality was just pretty awkward, which I was really into. It's like when I saw Noh Mercy and they only played, like, three songs because the majority of their songs had a Farfisa and they couldn't find one in time, so instead of just playing the songs sans Farfisa they didn't play them at all. And I really like that type of thing, when bands or whatever don't give the audience what they want. It's like every time I go to a show and people are yelling out song names, it just makes me think they've never played in a band before. Because I don't know about you, but not only is that shit annoying, but it makes me really not want to play whatever they are yelling. We're here to entertain you, but we're not here to entertain you.

I sent Roseanne Barrr (band, not the person) a fan letter and they wrote back and it was so

cool. I'm really obsessed with *Jeopardy!* I really want to be on it so bad. I managed to cut my face open and give myself a black eye in the span of two weeks. Apparently I have shitty balance and am maybe a little bit drunk. I was on a bus in Castro Valley and someone thought I was 19. As mentioned above, I'm 30.

Party with me punker: perpetualmagics@gmail.com

SAD BOYS. SAD BOYS! Lemme tell you about SAD BOYS: they're a pretty fucking awesome band. I'm still riding high from their excellent performance here as part of their West Coast jaunt with LA's DRAPETOMANIA, and this new EP just strengthens my conviction that these (relative) youths are 100% real live time travelers sent to the future from St. Mark's Place circa 1994 to teach the world an important lesson about pogo punk. Yeah, I know the pogo style wasn't invented there and then, but it was absolutely perfected there by the masters in the CASUALTIES and their innumerable disciples (BLANKS 77, the BRISTLES, 86'ED, the KRAYS, DYSFUNCTIONAL YOUTH, etc.). It's almost creepy how thoroughly they've mastered this simple catchy style with the one-two polka drums, bass and guitar lines welded together except for occasional forays into inept guitar melodies and rudimentary lyrics that even the most plastered glue bag casualty can remember and sing along with. What I love about SAD BOYS in relation to their predecessors is that they've managed to capture the underlying ugliness of the shitty glue-huffing drunk-in-the street lifestyle that's typically celebrated by bands in the genre. These genuinely dark lyrics are the product of punks who actually see the world as it is, not as it's celebrated in the drunken machismo of most "street punk" lyricists. Yeah, huffing glue and hanging out in the shittiest parts of the city aren't nearly as glamorous as some bands make them sound kids. Being that this is on the Toxic State label, I'm sure it'll disappear in a heartbeat based on pedigree alone but for what it's worth, this is easily my favorite release by that label thus far. And, par for the course with Toxic State, this is a crazy amazing package with gorgeous silkscreened covers and a fantastic insert that may well be in inspiration for my next tattoo. Fucking brilliant, live and on record and I can't wait for the next release. (Toxic State)

It's a cheap segue, but since CLEANSING WAVE are both female-fronted and from the Northeast US, let's get to their split with local hardcore warriors MIDNITE BRAIN next. I've been anticipating this split for a while as I was very much looking forward to hearing new material from both bands. I quite liked CLEANSING WAVE's EP, and after a somewhat lengthy intro (complete with samples, as if '90s throwbacks were a going theme on the East Coast these days) the rip into a pair of songs that easily live up to the legacy of their earlier work. The gem here is "Don't Wait", a quick ripper that manages to incorporate both contemporary dynamics and a rudimentary SKITLICKERS-influenced solo that doesn't sound out of place at all. The beginning of the record is pure ANTISCHISM but the meat of it is contemporary in the best possible sense, LOTUS FUCKER-ish in it's blending of clear vintage influence and modern sensibilities. But then we have MIDNITE BRAIN on the flip...and who can stand up to that onslaught? I still can't shake the NIGHTMARE comparison, they play this kind of burly-ass Japanese style hardcore so incredibly well, sliding from driving riff to punishing chug with stop-on-a-dime breaks and raging solos where appropriate (ie. not everywhere all the time the way some hot shit guitarists insist it be done). Dark lyrics here as well, deviating from the usual hardcore doom-and-gloom motif and into more abstract territory. Another strong outing from both bands, and one that I hope will get the attention it deserves despite the marked (and irritating) lack of internet chatter around either of these very fine bands. But, you know...fuck the internet anyway. (Twerp records, twerpjerks@gmail.com)

So Hardcore Survives has a new record out, and it's the FOLKEIIS *Destroy Agony* EP. Was I never not going to write about it? Perhaps in an alternate universe where I knew who the DESPERATE BICYCLES were and what they sound like, but not in this one! While FOLKEIIS hinted at a more metallic direction in their tracks on the *Complete Aural Turmoil* comp EP and *Step Into the Light LP*, this is a radical departure from the *Hell Kaaos Night* EP. Virtually all of the trappings of their earlier Finnish HC affectations are stripped away here (save the language and the heavy vocal reverb), and they seem to be stepping up to take their place as a Finnish-influenced but very much Japanese metallic hardcore band. It really is a bold transformation, going from slightly-updated KAAOS worship to stuff that fits very much in the later CROW/KRIEGSHOG vein. And it would be risible if it weren't so damned good. A1 ("Nightmare") and especially B1 ("Lucifer") are standouts, especially "Lucifer" which somehow joins Finnish HC aggression to G.A.T.E.S' swagger in an unholy (HA!) union of metallic punk. It's a startling departure from their early work, but a remarkably confident one. Get this. (Hardcore Survives, hardcore-survives.com)

Quick mentions of two outstanding new 12" releases as well. I have more to say in the reviews, but ISTERISMO have a new record that'll stab you in the fucking face (*Follia Verso L'interno*), and finally we have a vinyl pressing of CHAOS CHANNEL's *How You'd Never Been So High...* record. Augmented by liner note by *MRR*'s resident noize genius Tony G. and sounding like it finally should (which is to say rich and thick on a nice slab of petroleum product), this is the edition of this album I've been fucking waiting for for two goddamn years. The ISTERISMO is available from both Crust War and La Vida Es Un Mus and the CHAOS CHANNEL from the UK's TARDIS RECORDS. Buy both or die trying.

Cheers to all for another month. Go see SAD BOYS (or at least get the EP) and pogo your ass off in the meantime! Plus, as always, DEATH DUST EXTRACTOR 12"s and SWANKYS merch to me c/o *MRR* or at agunderwood@gmail.com.

Year End Top Ten 2012

HEAVY NUKES – "Ultra Mega Raw" 7" – When I first read about this 7" I thought it was some kind of parody, in the vein of *Dis is Getting Pathetic*. However, when I dropped the needle I was blown away. Totally rampaging legit 1982 Swedish hardcore punk. It has that ultra crude and untamed edge of early CIMEX, SHITLICKERS and AVSKUM that really gets the blood pumping. This record features essential elements such as distorted bass rumble, the burly guitar, the desperate raspy vocals and a certain raw urgency in the production. A lot of bands try to recapture this aesthetic but fall short, sounding too metal, too produced, to crusty etc. This record just combines all the essential elements to perfection.

INSTITUTION – "Domen Är Satt" LP – A late 2012 release from this new band featuring members of TOTALITÄR and MEANWHILE. This is picking up more or less where TOTALITÄR left off. It's outstanding Swedish hardcore/punk in every way. I think it falls just a little short of the levels TOTALITÄR reached, as the solos are not quite as inspired and the sound not quite as punchy and raw, but don't let these minor quibblings discourage you,

this is certified 100% raging.

DESPERAT / DEATHRAID – split LP – DESPERAT is my favorite band of the last few years. Ake and crew have not mellowed with age at all and continue to crank out the riffs and the driving C-beat that makes me pump my fist in the air and shout. DEATHRAID are no slouch either with some solid crusty hardcore on the flip.

DESPERAT – "Borjan Pa Slutet" 7" – More new material from these Swedish ragers featuring ex-members of MOB 47. What more can I say? How could you go wrong?

INFERNÖH – "War Tjard" 12" – This is probably my favorite release of 2012. This band's demo was amazing and the LP features songs from the demo and some more. Swedish hardcore that falls somewhere in between the faster- riff driven sounds of DESPERAT and the more rocking drive of HERATYS. Maybe the best comparison would be to SKITKIDS, but with less of a Japanese influence. These songs just leap off the turntable, so much driving power and energy it will make your hair stand on end. The only bummer about this LP is the packaging. This LP was very expensive as an import and despite having an awkward oversized sleeve the inner sleeve won't go inside without damaging it. Thankfully the packaging was re-done for the second press.

LAPINPOLTHAJAT – "Wahlroosin Unelma" LP – Simply outstanding second LP from this Finnish band. While most bands going for an old school Finnish sound copy bands like KAAOS or BASTARDS, this band plays excellent punk in the style of LAMA and APPENDIX. Rather than super raw and distorted chaos, you get catchy upbeat and somewhat melodic punk with a driving hardcore backbone. The songs are very well crafted and catchy but retain the raw urgency of early hardcore and snotty edge of old punk.

NAPALM RAID – "Mindless Nation" LP – I have been excited about this band since their first 7". This Halifax band is treading a well-worn path playing crusty hardcore in the vein of DOOM. However, they do it with a verve and panache that sets them apart from the multitude of bands playing in this style. Thunderous and pummeling, Crust Rules Everything Around Me.

MAAILMANLOPPU – "9 tracks" 12" – There have been a few bands of late who strive to capture the traditional Finnish hardcore sound, KIELTOLAKI, SOTATILA, LAPINPOLTHAJAT and now MAAILMANLOPPU. These guys have the early '80s Finnish hardcore punk sound we all long for. Catchy fast paced riffs, punchy vocals, shouted choruses. If you like this style, pick this one up.

SVART STÄDHJÄLP – "Under All Kritik" & "Lägenhetsbråk" 7" – By the time you read this, I think this band will have a third 7" out. This is some great punchy hardcore punk, influenced by early Dischord and X Claim sounds. Brings to mind bands like AMDI PETERSENS ARME.

YDINTUHO / KYLMÄ SOTA – split 7" – KYLMÄ SOTA are from Finland, but sound more like Swedish hardcore than the traditional Finnish sound. If you missed their 12" on Feral Ward, it was re-pressed to get a copy today. Scorching holocaust head eruption, totally explosive raw punk bomblasts. The production on this is thick and professional, which gives it a depth and power you would associate more with *Hear Nothing Say Nothing See Nothing*-era Discharge or Japanese bands, than say the rawness and urgency you get from the HEAVY NUKES EP cited above. YDINTUHO delivers a raw fuzzed out D-beat attack.

MARTYRDÖD – "Paranoia" LP – This band is a personal favorite and I released an LP for them some years ago. While I still think the first two LPs are their best work, I love the haunting cold and dark sounds this band creates. This is some raw metallic Kang that straddles the worlds of crust and early black metal. This is one of those bands that manages to create an atmosphere around their recordings. You can close your eyes and see some kind of pagan warlock performing cult rituals in some grim forsaken arctic mountain lair.

HERÄTYS – "Näen Punaista" 7" – To be honest I haven't heard this yet, waiting for the US press on Prank, but I figured it would count as a 2012 record if I try to include it in 2013. Everything by this band has been solid gold, so I can't imagine this 7" will be a let down.

MAUSER – "Isolation" LP – I figured I'd better include one American band in here. MAUSER are some young guys who deliver the goods, raw hardcore punk, their 7 inches were great and this LP is heavy and killer.

Some others I should mention: NOMAD 7", BLOODKROW BUTCHER 7", DEFORMITIES 7", THRASHERS flexi, KROMOSOM – "Paranoid" 7", AVFALL – "Dish it Out", SUDOR LP, POLISKITZO 7", VAASKA 7", PERIKATO 7".

While like everyone I have been collating a list of the best records of last year, I have also been collecting a list of the obscure and underrated of the year that's past. I remember a friend of mine complaining that the end of year lists are always the same. The same hyped records from Barcelona, the latest batch of noisy Japanese hardcore manglers, the new Swedish super D-beat group and the handful of US macho HC combos. And everyone everywhere goes on about the same bands, and as a consequence no one hears about equally great bands from Czech Republic, Brazil, Scotland or South Korean. It's a valid criticism, of course, but impossible to settle. Which is why I did a second list for 2012. See below.

Before that list, I am reminded of a friend of mine who used to be super active writing fanzines in the 1980s through the 1990s, and whose zine today (if remembered) symbolizes the best of international hardcore in that period. He told me when I asked why he stopped writing zines (he's still around today, sometimes seen at gigs) that suddenly everyone just cared about the records, the music, not the politics, the protest etc. People used to say "if you're only in it for the music, fuck off" but at some point punk and hardcore had devolved to just that, a music genre, nothing more. That's why he stopped writing about music. Anyway, I wish it was not just about the music.... Here's the list of already forgotten records and tapes of last year!

More Noize Charade: Top 2012 DIY Punk & Hardcore records

GANGSTER PUNK – "Yellow Legs" LP – This psyche garage raw punk band from the north of Finland seemingly came out of nowhere in 2012, but actually it turns out the band has been around since 2010. The three-piece, which started as a four-piece, has so far self-released a demo which shows a lot of promise of what is to come and two sevens inches (both on Florida label Defence records). Stepping up to the plate, this full-length album was recorded and released this year. It was the first I had heard of the band and it rocks!

UNKO – "Utopian Roads" 7" – Japanese hardcore band, very little is known about them, this EP was self-released. I like it lots! Sounds at turns like GAUZE and TRAGEDY.

NURASTISM – "First Draft" demo cassette – Swedish hardcore band with roots in black metal. Odd mixture but I like it. A-side is particularly good, with fifteen short but sweet shockers of Scandinavian hardcore that we all love so much. Think a mix between DISCHARGE and ANTI-CIMEX. B-side was a letdown with only ten songs, but in the same vein. Sadly limited to 50 copies, I heard the band is talking to a big Swedish label about releasing a 7" in 2013. Look forward to that!

NANOCORE – lathe CD-R – Grindcore band from Columbia played by boys and girls with peaked caps and tattoos! Not a genre I am usually very interested in, but this is too extreme! Some of you will know my preference for home-made and self-released records like this, on the flipside this is a band that deserves to be heard by the masses so

someone should chase down these cats and offer them a record contract, a Euro and US tour with lots of merchandise!

ANTIDOGMINE – "Gastro Humans" flexi – A real abrasive, guitar-heavy, mid-tempo punk record. The title song, which they've borrowed from a newspaper headline, concerns a cannibalistic ritual in Singapore and has an amazingly cool Polish-hardcore-flavored guitar bridge. Real hot! The other cuts are more typical.

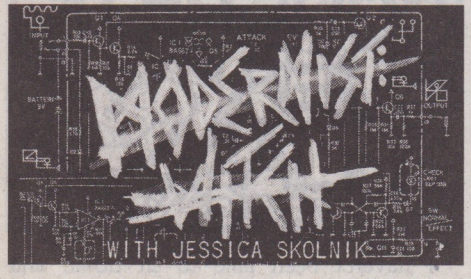
ROLLAND'S KULSPRUTA – demo – Eighteen previously recorded songs that range from '77-style punk to thrash to current punk to Oi!. The quality of the material and sound varies, but most of it is absurdly predictable. I like this band a lot, but there certainly aren't any classics here.

SONS OF DISCO – "Never Play With Water" LP – Brandishing additive progressive-rock, post-hardcore and retro electronic sounds since their 2011 double single *Never Play With Oxygen*, the band are now back with their highly anticipated debut, showing how relevant they are in today's music scene.

SINKING STONES – "War in the Finland" 7" – Filled with classic hooks and some impressionable vocals, SINKING STONES from Germany make for a positive first impression. One of their biggest strengths surfaces with opening track, "This is Why We Can't Have Bad Things," and carries the album in style.

OMEN'S LEFT HAND CROOK – "Satanist Attack" 12" – The LP finishes on a song of low deep singing which nearly seems to be like chanting, with guitar picking and the sound of what I think is a fire, which I think blends well with art depictions of ancient death on the LP. Really love every aspect of this LP.

NOGGER – "Icecream is Forever" cassette – Great, old school noisecore with very little musical influences. Sometimes they start with punky midpaced tempo, but within seconds it erupts to full blast. Two vocalists deal with the growls and screams, and the drummer keeps up tempos of what wasn't lost to Blondie or other fames. Sound is excellent and raw, in Brazilian tradition. Each of the songs include lyrics, with comments of decaying society.



Anatomy of the World'sMost Frustrating Conversation: Punk Edition

None of the content of this column will come as any surprise to anyone who knows me or has read anything I've written in this space. I am not calling out a specific band here, but it seems like it's time once again to have The Conversation. You know, The Conversation. It's been happening in punk spaces since the beginning of punk—I have personally been having it since 1991 or so, but you can trace it through the archives of this magazine and any number of oral histories.

Here is how The Conversation goes.

Band A uses a slur, makes a rape joke or something of that nature—a deliberately provocative act, given the contexts and histories of the words and tropes they are using.

Person B, a punk, perhaps another band member, or someone who books shows or maybe not says, "Hey! This slur/trope negatively affects me. That's fucked up and hurtful."

Band A finds themselves at odds with some members of the community. Maybe someone chooses not to book Band A because they're not into having that kind of talk/action in their space. Maybe other people call them out. Maybe all of the above.

Band A and/or Defenders of Band A get angry that the deliberately provocative thing Band A did has logical fallout.

Person B and the people backing Person B become characterized as the "PC Police" and there is a lot of talk from Band A and/or Defenders of Band A about how persecuted they are and how punk is about being provocative and how oversensitive everyone who criticizes them are. Negative fallout from the provocative act becomes characterized as "censorship."

Do you see the logical missteps here?

Our community is made up of individuals, and the strength of that community rests on the strength of our relationships. As I wrote in my last column, we need to be able to trust one another for any DIY scene to work. Many of us gravitated to punk because we were weirdos with difficult backgrounds; we had experiences with systemic oppression and abuse. I am under no illusion that punk is a place free of the same racism, sexism, homophobia, classism and transphobia that characterizes the larger media culture, but I have done my best as a musician, writer, show booker and friend to create relationships free of those things.

I don't want to associate with anyone who is interested specifically in propping up those systems, because they are systems that personally hurt me and the people I love. If you choose to do so (and joking about those topics in such a way that minimizes the experiences people who deal with these things in our real lives have, is reifying them; there is a boatload of theory and real-life experience alike that supports that conclusion), I will not want to associate with you. Fine. Acknowledge your position and let me go, let me build my own thing. Understand that people will be put off by your button-pushing—isn't that why you're doing it in the first place?

The thing is that The Conversation is so boring, that these things have been said thousands of times over and yet the same retread meathead topics keep coming up, and we have to go back to square one to break it down. Think about all the fun, cool, interesting shit we could all be doing if we weren't having The Conversation endlessly?

And we would not be having The Conversation endlessly if we dropped the idea that simplistic, "offensive" replication of mainstream oppressive language and imagery was somehow a critique thereof or that it's justified because "punk is about pissing people off." The punk I signed up for is about pissing off those in power, those who make oppressive policies, not our fellow punks.

There's this weird right-wing mythos that being sensitive to any person who is not exactly like you is somehow reflective of a weakness in character rather than the strength in character I believe it to be. To look outside yourself is useful, thoughtful, humane.

I will leave you with an example. I wrote a zine in 1999 about my own personal experiences with sexual assault. A lot of amazing conversations and a lot of important friendships that I treasure today came about because of that zine. I also got some anonymous hate mail to my PO box and clunky email box. Some words about how I was fat, ugly, how I deserved what had happened to me or how the person writing the anonymous screed believed I was lying because who would want to have (even consensual) sex with a cow like me?

The same people who send these horrific things are the same people who do not believe rape culture exists and that I am being too sensitive by speaking up about it. But if I speak up about it and that's what happens, doesn't that…prove that rape culture exists? Let's stop eating our tails, please. Please. I am very tired.

Please send non-hateful things (disagreement is fine, gross bullshit is not) to: modernistwitch@gmail.com // themodernistwitch.tumblr.com.

I have started writing this column on the 30th of December at 1 am. Guess I will finish this a week after the deadline deep in January. Whatever. My birthday is coming up. It's on the 3rd of January. I will turn 26 which means

it's four more years until punk death = 30 (it means you are still punk through half of your life even if you've joined in the last minute which is at age 16). January 3rd. Same exact day Nietzsche went crazy after he saw a person beat a horse to almost death. On that date Hitler's father died, which is kinda funny if I think about it—my dad shares a birthday with Hitler's death day. Both of us look like we are Jewish while we are not. Also my first band (that was supposed to play its first show on my 16th birthday, but got delayed to one week after) broke up on my father's birthday and on Hitler's death day. It's just my sentimental mind that makes such a big deal out of dates, not that I have the agenda to point out that there is some cosmic thing about me. I still am just some regular dude who maybe thinks too much about the whole universe.

I have a roommate but our flat is just one room. I ordered him to set up a surprise party for me otherwise I will throw him out onto the streets. 'Cause for sure I'm just like everybody else; I want surprise parties every year and to also survive my funeral and to see how people realized since I'm gone that they kinda loved me. I only had one birthday party and maybe I had it because I share the same birthday with one of my best friends. So he had a birthday party and I was invited as well and I got a cake too. I almost had an amazing birthday once. I was a freshman in high school and just got into punk, in the sense that I had started going to shows every three months and was also posting on local message boards. There was a festival on my birthday with all the best local bands I loved then. Two of them have raised me in a way. And we were supposed to go there with all my norm friends and a girl from my class who looked beautiful, listened to NOFX and was kinda sweet to me (she ended up being a junkie).

Everyone quit on me early afternoon. So from the best possible night of my then so far life by a second, it turned into the worst shit ever. I locked myself in my room and was just blasting a CD by one of the bands that played that night on full volume and sang along to the lines like *"if they say life is a crime then I'm innocent 'cause I wasn't happy not even for a day"*. While I cried. My mother freaked out because she is just a person who cares, so she asked my brother to sacrifice his Saturday night and be my entourage or more like my driver and security guard for that show. She said I couldn't be depressed on my birthday. But she also thinks no one should be depressed at any time, even if she always tells me she is depressed—luckily she isn't really. My brother dug out some of his most worn out clothes as camouflage and we went for the show. He got bored quick so we only watched two-and-a-half bands and the half band was the band that changed my life. It also it shared members with my then future band and the friend with whom we share the same birthday. Also the band I was blasting in the solitude of my temporary teenage tragedy I shared membership in two bands with one of the members.

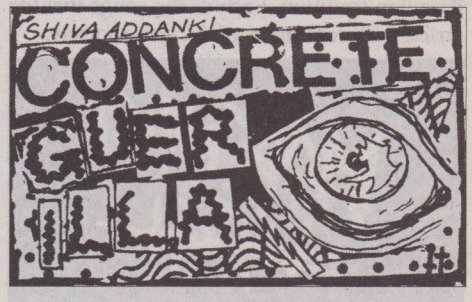
That night was kinda magical. The place was in a total blown out part of the city. Many scary people: Strung out bums, aggressive skinheads, random low life people. My brother stayed in the back and I lost myself in the crowd. The whole event was like I finally stepped into a place where I belonged. It was full of excitement and addictive danger. I saw many things that night that were new but I understood them. It was the same frustration I had, the same need to be somewhere where you feel finally at home. When you feel like finally you are close to something important. Where you can disappear to be found. It was something I could describe but it wouldn't make any sense to people who weren't there, even if they would understand my words.

A decade later, after a Neon Piss show here in our town, we were sitting outside the venue drinking beer and smiling. Discussing with friends that if we went in to work the following day, what would we say. That we went to a show. But it was at a rehearsal room at an industrial site. Where only 40 people came but the whole room was dripping in sweat and happiness and spilled beers, thus it felt like the whole world is in that room. The crowd was half naked, even some girls, that we were hugging each other and due to this at some point everybody lost track of where their bodies end and other people's start. It was just beautiful. It was the same thing, the same thing that is still fresh. The same thing that I finally found out about that night eleven years ago.

In the unstoppable force of the crowd when my favorite local band played and it was just loud and beautiful and so true. The singer who's now my friend was singing so loud it woke me up for days. We left at half of their set and I remember sitting in my brother's car, feeling like I'm in a bubble and this will protect me. That bubble has expanded and now it's full with friends and memories and achievements. Like last night on my birthday, where I got a fanzine with many of my friends saying amazingly sweet things about me, about how they see me and about how we are in each other's lives. And fuck, I think I'm kinda bipolar 'cause it is changing in me always—that either I feel amazing for no reason or terribly shitty for no reason. But maybe they are right and everything is possible and we will make it.

It's just weird. I hate education but love learning and thinking, so nowadays sometimes I read philosophy, mostly on Wikipedia and then think for myself. Probably this made me realize things, or worse, and due to me being as stupid as fuck, I project these badly understood ideas on my life. Anyway, I spent this afternoon hanging with my friends, ate a lot, made out with an amazing girl then met for a birthday dinner with my ex-girlfriend, strolled with her a little bit, had a couple laughs then I started listening to Neu!. Took a bus ride and started reading my birthday gift which was the fanzine. And started crying on the bus. Came home finished the rest. Not all my friends wrote in this. And it was weird who some of the people who wrote in it are, but instead of feeling that I lack some people here, I just started recalling all the amazing things that happened to us, with us and how I love some people and how much they did for me. And fuck one of my all time favorite band Cloak/Dagger just made a picture for me, with all of them greeting me with pizza and moonshine. This made me think on something else as well.

One of the most influential people from the Bay Area scene and maybe from all over the world has just passed away in the recent past. I have never met Sarah Kirsch although one of my best friends played with her in many bands and she was his best friend. When I read the news I did not know what to do. I just felt that there's a friend at the other end of the world and he is in a big loss and I just can't help him now. I can't be there for him because when someone dies it's the people still alive who suffer in such grieving matters. It was amazing in a way how many people responded, by showing their appreciation for how much Sarah did for them, for her city, for her community, for our community that is international punk. And it was Robert from *MRR* and Terminal Escape who said these things should be said while we are alive. So I wrote a letter to my friend and I told him how much I miss him, how much he did for me and how much I'm sad for his loss. And what else could and should we do to make life better for the living? Mostly for ourselves, because that's the person we have to stay with for the most part. And if you get appreciated just hang on to that. Keep it true even after you have received someone's love. Just try because the good things should start at one point.



I haven't been able to sit down and produce anything of value to submit here in a little while. Time is swelling and contracting. There have been many seeds to harvest in these recent times, don't get me wrong—I'm not all jaded just yet, but it's tough to find enough serenity to pick the shards out of my

brain and tap 'em out onto a screen, then press 'send'. Here's something.

Rochester, NY is home to one of the most interesting gangs of underage subterranean freaks and morons. When the goofball clan called Flip Shit played in NYC they came stacked and huddled in a pick-up truck with a whole crew of uglies in tow—who came rushing out of there like an ant colony to load gear in with supreme efficiency. They're the kinda clan that plays shows in tunnels, all of 'em look like draft dodgers and shell-shocked Vietnam vets, and the bands all sound like they were dreamed up in a bedroom with no windows, a case of beer, and a handful of the same freaks. I just got the latest 'smash hit' from Reel Time, a split single from Bad Taste and Brain Car. The cover of the thing looks like a back-tattoo dreamed up by a 16-year-old meth-head motorcyclist, and the Bad Taste side sounds like her favorite jam—it's even called "Warzone High". I've been listening to this ridiculous bad-viber all day and it's turning my head into mush. It really shouldn't work, but it does. Simpleton psychedelic guitaring drips steadily on a lurching easy-rider beat, while some freaked out adolescent howls from a bathroom stall. It's not heavy, it's not tight, and it's got no muscle on it—you can practically see their ribcages from your bedroom. But it works, they got some soul somewhere, and it's shining out of their hollow, glassy eyes. This is what a more hedonistic Seeds would sound like on Sunday morning practice in the outhouse. They even go all Helter Skelter with the thing and false-stop, only to come back with firecrackers going off in the background. Who said kids with shaved heads, acne and switchblades in their leather jacket pockets couldn't dig that groove? I didn't. Brain Car play "Be True to your School" on the B-side, which may or may not be a cover, it could really go either way. It's just about as smart as it sounds—like deranged kids covering the Beach Boys, half-joking. But this thing is completely worth it for the Bad Taste track, I want more.

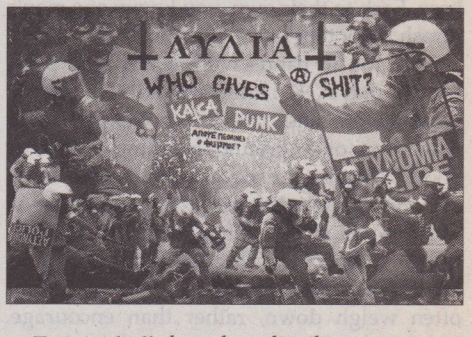
Aaron Aspinwall provides some fix for backcountry brain damage with his three-story collection, *People at War with Themselves*, produced by Calico Grounds. The Ropes/Repos singer leaves the rotted out surrealism of his band's lyrical content/aesthetic in favor for brutal narrative simplicity. These stories—chunks picked out of desperately small, violent and hostile lives—observe and describe the madness and hallucinations of others from a detached vantage point. He conveys both microcosmic catastrophe and beauty with plainspoken grace. This small collection could just as well be a novella, just like the 30-second bursts of abject terror produced by the Ropes are knee-jerk fragments of an odyssey. This is one of the most interesting pieces of printed matter from 2012.

Destruction Unit plays more to what you'd expect when reading about psychedelia in a punk mag. Muscular, steadfast drums beating on in a plateau for power-electronic swirl, guitar screech and echoing, disaffected vocals. While Bad Taste is busy licking basement floors in Rochester, Destruction Unit stares at the sky from the Arizona desert. Their six-song Void LP was released as a tape on Ascetic House (great name), and it's all full of droning, swirling, repetition—which has the potential to be boring or stimulating. The difference is primarily up to taste, but it can be done well, and they do it well. Destruction Unit is heavy and powerful, the best imaginable outcome to what I imagine from the term "space rock". I missed 'em live in NYC because I was off shooting the shit in an abandoned hallway with my bandmates, but I heard they were the perfect mix of camp and real genuine grooves. I prefer anything "psychedelic" to be twitching at the threat of oblivion, but their steadfast, eerie calm seems like something to aspire to.

La Misma is the best new band in NYC. Vicious, energetic basement screams and screeches warbling and reverberating around in dirty rooms with low ceilings. Thirty, forty or however many years of junkyard bashing called "punk" is turned inside-out and sounds new and weird all over again. The only real test for hardcore bands is if they get you so riled up that they could have you jumping off a cliff in a conniption fit—and they've done this since their first show. The songs rise until your toes curl while you stomp around crazed 'till they end—tension-n-release, ma. Real bouncy and transcendent noise on their demo tape, don't miss it. It's all buzz-bomb riffing and firecracker drumming—reverbed shrieks over the whole thing. You'll feel like a puppet operated by an epileptic when you put it on.

Kremlin took a promo tape of their upcoming 12" on tour with 'em, and they blew their great demo tapes and solid 7" outta the water. There is an alarmingly small number of truly ace hardcore 12-inches, if you keep it to short-sharp-shocks it takes a lot to keep the blood boiling. They engineer a deadly sort of controlled chaos that creates those twitching, sweating, wide-eyed moments like nothing else. This sort of adrenalin manipulation is what makes hardcore as a music so addictive, despite the vast sea of sheep and trash bands who offer nothing to the table other than recycled garbage and pedantry. Kremlin and others are a great reminder of how easy it is to ignore all that. Airtight drumming leads fuzzy and prickly riffs, stolen and twisted up from NWOBHM records—I imagine this is what Amdi Petersen's Arme would sound like jamming on Discharge, not to mute their distinction. They really shine in the mid-paced stompers, like all good HC bands, and they make the kind of noise that makes shaved-headed kids with chains on their boots smash beer cans on their heads and beat the shit out of each other. When they speed it up it's all adrenalin and flailing legs. Crude, cruel hardcore propaganda for the new generation.

The Cisma demo tape is the perfection of the bedroom scum that I was talking about with the Nuestra Forma de Pensar tape, released by Cisma's guitarist Teo Hernandez. Dust and dirt scraped off concrete and fed through a four-track recorder. They express a rabid desire to do something meaningful with trembling hands, and resort to beating up a few innocent instruments to get out some of the tension. Typewritten, photocopied, homemade, dirty and rough. The only band I can think of whose self-titled song trumps their others. They sound calloused by isolation, probably 'cause they're from an island. Alta Intensidaz rarely disappoints and this is probably one of the finer crude slabs cut from Teo's handiwork.
c/o: eggmangel@gmail.com



To avoid all the other shit that's going on in my head right now, I'm going to stick to the theme: great records of the year that just left us. The generally tepid year 2012. The year we all expected change to come about. The year we all survived. What happened in that year? Well, mainly my country finally decided it was time to show its true racist, fascist self. I officially closed three years of unemployment. I also packed up a suitcase and left. Moved to SF to help run this here magazine. It was no easy thing to do and I am still working my head around the fact that I'm actually in this situation. Everything is new, I am learning so much, hearing so many new bands and records—it's quite overwhelming, in a good way, most of the time.

So, what makes a good record? Well, I will not talk from the point of view of a musician, for I am not one. I have never played in a band and couldn't strum the first notes of a Ramones song if I tried. But, as a listener and appreciator of punk music, in all of its many magnificent expressions, I do know what I like to hear. Certain qualities stand out for me that make up a good record.

Originality: OK, not all bands have to push the boundaries. Not all bands can. Some go with tried and tested methods and become huge—people like a familiar jams. Others forge

their own way regardless of what the current trend may be, only to go horrible overlooked; until their eventual break-up that is, by which time they are "the most underrated band of the year". While I am not one of those harsh critics, who expects every record of every band to be sublime and ground breaking, I am also not one to stick to the same ol' same ol'—I like me some innovation, some peculiarities, quirky thinking and outside-the-box action. In fact, the more complex and seemingly undecipherable your approach, the better; show me you use your fucking head!

Some bands effortlessly manage this; it is just in their blood and it is remarkable to say the least (a prime example are Sonic Youth). Others try hard and still fail. "No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better." The important thing is that you tried.

And then, some bands don't even try at all. Half-arsed copy-cat crap you can see through from a mile away. Shameless, arrogant and self-entitled. But hey, that's also fine with me; I'm just not going to be part of your fan base. Each to their own, you know; one man's thrash is another man's torture.

So…not all bands will go down in punk history, that's OK. I know a handful of people, punk lovers and critics, who expect *every record* by a (once) ground- breaking band to be good. When they discover it is not, they shout and complain in protest, passing judgment on what the band did wrong and why it failed. Maybe I expect less to get disappointed less. Hey, sometimes, other people's expectations often weigh down, rather than encourage. Maybe what I find matters more is…

Energy: A quality that I think can ultimately make or break a band. You could have the dumbest, most generic punk music, with songs about pizza and beer…if the delivery is true, chances are you'll sway an audience (however small) into appreciation. Maybe five records down the line you're still playing what some people liberally term "shitty Euro crust" and you haven't really evolved beyond your demo material—so what? You're making music you like, right? (At least I jolly well hope you are!) If that is what you like and that is what makes you tick, and it comes from a *true place* in your heart, then hell, who are the music critics to tell you it's crap? At least you own that crap 100%, so there.

Because so often you'll hear a record that may not be reinventing the wheel of punk per se, but the delivery will be so earnest and contagious, that you can't help but get carried away with it. Oi! and street punk (and post-rock) are great examples of this quality. So many bands replicate recipes but only few of them can actually pull it off. The purity and engagement are so strong, the passion so intense, that it leaves a distinct mark on the sound. However, one thing that can write all of this good energy off is…

Message: Something of utmost importance to me. After all, what is punk if not *a message in and of itself*? That says—nay, screams the truth: people/punks are capable of both self-governance and collective collaboration, proven by the persistent independent, DIY ethic and strong community output, both past and present. People/punks are capable of wonderful and valuable creation, proven by the countless formations of punk expression and ways of counter-creative production. People/punks are facilitators of change, proven by the environments of equality and support that they create.

Yet not all punk scenes around the world move at the same pace, thus the collective consciousness of a scene is, in some way or another, related to its history. Not to say that some places are "late-bloomers" (there was no *one birthplace* of punk, so get over it). Ultimately punk is a reaction and as long as there is fucked up shit going on in this world and sensitive who people respond/react to it, punk will manifest—even if like a mutant spawn of something else equally fucked up. The important thing is that punk remains by the punks, for the punks. If the punks are bitches, that will affect the final outcome. And if the rest of the punks don't give a shit, they will eventually acclimatize to this new state of being (getting comfortable are we?), maybe even fall into a coma (brain dead zombie punk!), or become host to some horrible virus (caught off the internet), which will sink in and contaminate the whole darn thing into a decadent, ruthless cannibal addicted to battery-acid and gambling. … But I digress.

Punks that passively nullify everything are fine in my book; rather useless but harmless nonetheless. It's not counter-productive or creatively coming up with solutions to anything (it is in fact rather defeatist since *you are actually here now*) but it exists. Staying home because the world is a cruel, twisted, unfair place; only spending energy on expressing how useless and depressing everything is, sung in a long-winded poetic fashion maybe; maintaining minimal relations with people because getting involved is too heart-aching when you really care—true, true and true. Been there, done that, rose from the ashes like a phoenix, returned back stronger and wiser. No, nihilist punks who purposefully chose to discuss only the horrid curse that is life don't bother me; I suspect they'll self-nullify at some point and be no more. ("No future for you" if you let it be that way. Time is relevant and so is "success" and "happiness".)

But you know, some people live in a bubble of self-important arrogance, wasting time shit talking and getting into fights, trying to outpunk each other; perpetuating shitty attitudes and eventually giving in to the very bullshit punk originally wanted to avoid—it's all rather unpunk if you ask me and i suspect it has been happening since the dawn of punk. Of course, this is a "free" world (for some) and (nearly) everyone is allowed to say whatever they want (or so we are led to believe), so *anything goes*, right? Wrong! Look, I'm not saying *you have to express (your) politics in your lyrics*, I'm just saying that if you have an abhorrence for anything political and ignore the significance of the role it plays in punk, it's not my cup of tea. I mean, you could be the nicest dork on the planet; I'm not saying you're a shitty person, I'm just saying the line between punk music and punk action is often blurry. Then again, you could be the biggest rocker since Joey Ramone, or the brightest brain since John Cage; but if you employ shitty politics, your lyrics and visual message—your outlook and opinions, you *attitude*—are *against* the punk ethics, then hell yes, I will think that your record sucks! (no more shock-value swastikas please, it is highly distressing and offensive given that that shit is very very real!) And the number of apolitical wishy-washy douches that can make *punk music* is undoubtedly and disappointingly very high, because they can, because apparently it's easy: three chord guitars, tupa-tupa drums and yelling dissonantly at top volume (or so the word on the street is). But making punk music is not the same as actually being punk. Chances are (the right kind of) punks will see right through it and move along. The importand thing is to remember that if you do not speak for yourself, someone else will speak for you. If you shit where you eat, shit's gonna taste bad! It is a slight yet so grand thing to try and remember to remain humble. So much talk to cover insecurities and fears. If you buy the ticket, you take the ride.

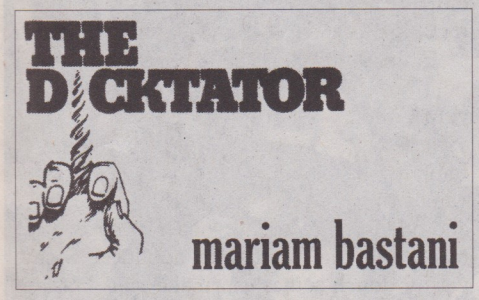
Which brings me to my final point: **Purity of Heart.** Let's face it, not all bands get big because they're innovative or because they have something truly meaningful to say. Sorry to disappoint y;all but it's true. Some bands get big because punks who like them are slightly stoopid (yes, sorry to pop that buble too, but they do exist). Other bands get huge because of internet hype (and yes, of course, they could very well be excellent, hence their reputation); and others go viral merely because talking about something validates and grosses its actual existence and hence, potential value. If a group of us started talking about a band from Somalia, and continued to do so long enough or spread the word wide enough, or both, "that band from Somalia" would be on everybody's lips before you could say "paroxysm"!

And this is the wish I will leave you with, or perhaps word of advice. If your goal is to make a truly great, memorable punk record, ignore everybody! Do what you do because you want to. When expression is a need, fans are merely a plus. Do it with conviction and no fear of failure. After all, mistakes are there to be learned from. Stand up for what you believe in , "be the change" (cliché but true!)

Going over my picks for my 2012 Year End Top 10, I can't help but think of all the

oppressed, imprisoned, "trapped" punks… Those who have been punished for their punk politics, who have suffered for their ethics and who, despite everything, have never given up the fight. None of this is in vein! Don't put punk to shame!

Endnotes: Happy Birthday to...me, and both my sisters! Miss you, love you! For more art by Ermis who did our awesome cover this month, check out www.ermisart.com.



Hate Speech.

Holy shit! It's March everybody! Here in the US we are all scrambling to file our tax returns (those who do that), Mardi Gras is coming up, Bulgaria will be celebrating it's independence from the Ottoman Empire, Wiccans (not the band) will be nude in the forest doing a spiral dance for the Spring Equinox, everyone will be Irish for a day and I will still be here in my underwear drinking beer and listening to this Estomagos LP. That's right, who cares about March? Spring is nice, I guess… (Biff from Brown Sugar has a tattoo on his upper thigh in the shape of Florida with the word "Spring Break" right there" in front of God and everybody" to see…)

So, if you have ever read my column before, you know that I have this "preoccupation" with race, culture, punk and religion (they intersect, I swear). I know, I know, everyone has their own experiences to varying degrees. I appreciate that all of us are from different cultures with different experiences depending on where we live in the world, how we grew up and our ethnic make-up, but I have to say…I am really fucking sick of punks (middle to upper class) telling me how to 1) identify 2) feel and 3) deal with racism. This is a chance for me to say, "Fuck Off." Seriously, fuck the fuck off.

It doesn't usually come to this. Don't get me wrong, I hear racist shit all fucking day long, but lately for some bizarre reason I have been dragged in to conversations about race with total fucking idiots and I am fed up. For you international readers out side of the US or north America, I just want to say that this may or may not be a conversation that you have to engage in, but I assure you that I am not making any claim about what your experience is nor am I saying that shit is harder here than other places. I know that is not true. I am merely reporting something I have observed lately and critiquing it…

1) Identity: If a brown person makes you feel uncomfortable for making a comment about being brown, you are being racist. It's true. Listen Racist, if someone's brown-ness and their referring to this "brown-ness" makes you uncomfortable or feel left out, that's your fucking problem. Rather than lament your bullshit, how's about trying to figure out why it is you are racist? Who the fuck are you tell anyone how they should identify? I assure you that if marginalized people, and I mean marginalized by the "state" or by society or by subculture, don't identify themselves, someone will assign a label for them.

When I was a kid, I realized early on that shit was fucked in the US when I took the first standardized school test. You filled out your name, age and race… Race? Yeah, we have "Caucasian," "Black," "Hispanic," "Asian or Pacific Islander" and… that was it. When I asked what to check for Persian and Mexican, I would either get, "Ummm… Pacific Islander…" or "Hispanic?" One drop, huh?

2) I keep hearing shit like, "That's purely anecdotal," "that's just your point of view," "I think you are over reacting." Again, go fuck yourself. If you are my friend and I am legitimately being a spazz, sure... let me know BUT if you are saying these things to avoid accountability for your actions or words or minimizing how I feel because you don't understand it, go fuck yourself. How are you going to tell people who have been dealing with the problem of prejudice their whole lives that they are wrong? I guarantee that we have experienced it more than you have. "Reverse racism," indeed...Stupid fuckers...

When 9-11 happened, I was home with my roommate. We were both getting ready for work and when the news reported that the people who were responsible for this, "heinous anti-American" act were Middle Eastern, I confided in her that I was afraid for my family. Her response? "I don't think you have anything to worry about. You know this event isn't about you. You shouldn't try to get attention because of this." Followed up by, "You know...I know that I said I hated George Bush, but I am really glad he is in charge during this time of crisis." I moved out the next week.

3) I was having a conversation with a trans friend of mine comparing how we deal with "curious" vs. rude at different levels of cultural intersection and she said, "Sometimes I just don't want to talk about my balls." Agreed. Just because you are used to being heard all the time by virtue of where you are from, how much money you have or your skin color, doesn't mean that anyone will "have a dialogue" with you when you fucking want to. This is real fucking life and if I don't wanna talk to you about why Mexicans work in kitchens or how you don't understand why what you did was shitty or how this is a "safe space" (don't get me started with that…) or how you revel in all things "Latino," does not guarantee I am gonna give you any of my time. Fuck you.

I was at a show here in SF and I saw this super fucking white dude wearing a jean jacket with a backpatch that had a drawing of Cholas and a low-rider on it. I didn't assume that dude was a white supremacist because believe it or not, that is not the way I divide up the world, but I did assume that this was part of this ironic blasé inertia that everyone is caught up it. At some point we were sitting near each other. I said, "Hey I like your backpatch. That one looks like me!" I was fucking around, but dickface says to me, "yeah, well, I was brought up around a bunch of Lat-teeen-ohhh women, ok? So you don't need to comment on my patch." WTF? I couldn't help but laugh! If you were brought up by Latinas then you should at least know how to deal with one. Oh shit, I didn't realize you were "more Lat-teeen-ohhh" than I am. Is that the way you divide up the world?

I am sick of this indignant "white man's burden" routine. Here's a tip, when you grow up getting fucked with about shit you can't control: class, sexuality, color, culture, you learn how to pick and choose your fights. The reason that I know how to deal with racist pieces of shit like yourself is because I have been doing it my whole life. You need to recognize that we though we may not agree, we POC might be smarter than you are in matters of racism, so fuck off. You are fucking lucky that I am not 22 anymore or you and I would be going to jail.

That felt good. Please send all your complaints to mariam@maximumrocknroll.com. I get hate mail frequently, so fuck you too.

In other news...We are starting a giant project to fix the massive *MRR* record archive! That's right! All 45,000 records will be moved around a bit to accommodate the ever-shrinking vinyl space! We are all very excited about this and we hope that the new system will be more user-friendly, reduce theft and protect the records! Come visit us at the compound if you can to make mix tapes and check out the library! Also, the new international comp LP we have been working on is in its final stages! We are in the process of sequencing now and we hope to have the LP out in a few more weeks!

We are still looking for a new coordinator to replace me! We have some good applicants and by the time you read this, there may be someone chosen for the job, but if you are interested, let us know!

I want to apologize to any subscribers and distros that got the last two issues late. The mail here is California is fucked because of the new Homeland Security act, holidays and the changes to media mail. Thanks for being patient! Without you we couldn't survive!

Lastly, Raping the East? Grow the fuck up. The only thing that is shocking about this is your desperation. The only thing more embarrassing is people defending you.

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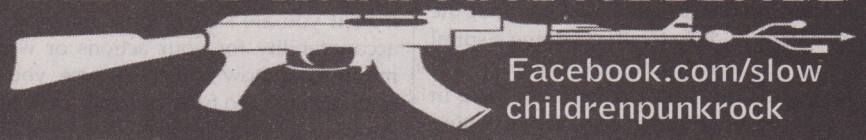

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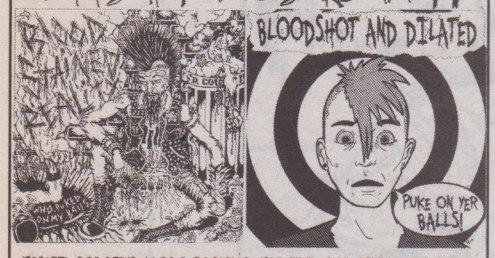

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NEWS

Maximum Rocknroll News compiled by Donny

SELF DETERMINATION IN CHERÀN, MICHOACÀN MEXICO

by Simòn Sedillo of ElEnemigo Comun.net

On December 11, 2012 the US Justice Department announced that banking giant HSBC was immune from prosecution despite overwhelming evidence that the bank consistently failed to implement controls against money-laundering. Assistant Attorney General Lanny Breuer said, "Had the US authorities decided to press criminal charges, HSBC would almost certainly have lost its banking license in the US, the future of the institution would have been under threat and the entire banking system would have been destabilized."

The entire banking system would have been destabilized?

The Department of Justice opted rather to charge HSBC a record-breaking $1.9 billion fine and ordered the bank's activities monitored for five years. The $1.9 billion is equivalent to five weeks' worth of HSBC earnings—in other words, a drop in the bucket. The saddest part of the story in the mainstream media is the focus on money laundered and money fined as opposed to lives lost and crime legitimized in one of the most grotesque admissions of complicity with organized crime in the so-called war on drugs. Basically, what was announced to the world by the US Justice Department was that the money ran too thick and the criminals were too powerful. The global economic impact of prosecuting a bank where the dirty money has been going was too dangerous to risk. "Sorry kids, but we guess the bad guys win."

In Cherán, Michoacán, Mexico, the news of HSBC's immunity from criminal prosecution and US sanctions came as no surprise. Organized crime has been prevalent in the community since 2000. After a 2008 mayoral race that left a PRI (Institutional Revolutionary Party) candidate in office, illicit activity increased substantially. The community learned that organized crime is an integral part of local politics and economics everywhere. Cherán is a beautiful, small, indigenous, Purepecha mountain community that is surrounded by precious forests and knows the true cost of those profits laundered. Immediately after the 2008 mayoral race, the community began experiencing the devastating effects of dog-eat-dog capitalism of which organized crime is only another part.

The illegal logging industry began to ravage the community's most precious forests, which have been traditionally respected as a spiritual connection by the Purepecha people to their territory. The logging began to look a lot more like pillaging, and when community members began to attempt to defend their forests, they were met with a real-life nightmare: The loggers were not only aided and protected by government agencies and local police, the entire logging operation was being coordinated by members of a major organized-crime syndicate.

The first community members who began to defend their forest were assassinated. From 2008 to 2011, the situation only became worse. Criminals charged protection to run even a small business in Cherán. The forest was devastated and terror reigned; everyone felt at risk. This is a reality confronted by too many communities in Mexico.

Murders, disappearances, kidnappings, the criminal effects of illegal logging and the reign of terror came to a head in the early morning of April 15, 2011. A group of women had begun quietly organizing an action in the days before to try to bring the ravaging of their town to a halt. On April 15, with children and youth at their sides, the women rose up and attempted to detain loggers traveling through town. The loggers tried to run the women over, and, in response, the community reacted as a whole and began burning the loggers' vehicles and detaining the loggers themselves.

At this point, the community recognized the complicity of the local police when police officers guided organized-crime thugs to the place where the loggers were being held in an attempt to violently release them. The community erected fogatas (bonfire barricades) throughout town in order to prevent violence against community members. Within days, the community decided that it no longer trusted any politician from any political party or any of the local and state police. They began to organize for self-determination and self-defense and chose to return to their traditional Purepecha forms of self-governance.

A general council of community elders was elected, and commissions were formed in order to carry out the community's logistical, social, economic and political needs. Community members simply say that they referred to their history and their elders in order to return to the way the community was organized before political parties, police and organized crime existed. Today, the general council is legally recognized as the governing body of Cherán.

The community has maintained that they only have three demands: safety, justice and the reforestation of their territory. They have actively been reforesting the entire region and take that aspect of their struggle very seriously, reminding us that, for them, protecting the forest is both a traditional and a spiritual obligation. Cherán does not believe that anybody will ever be able to bring them justice for their dead, disappeared and displaced as a result of the conflict, nor do they expect anyone in power to understand the justice they seek for the forest. Cherán knows that justice is something they will have to obtain on their own from now on. When it comes to safety, the world is able to see what it looks like for a community to take responsibility for its own well-being through traditional indigenous forms of self-governance and self-defense.

Shortly after the 2011 uprising began, community members state that the local politicians and the police exiled themselves in fear from Cherán. Community members took over local government offices, commandeered police trucks, seized police weapons and put it all to use. Historically, people from within the community had traditionally defended Cherán. In a voluntary rotation, members from four barrios would patrol the community in what is known as the ronda (community guard). After the uprising, the general council made a call-out for volunteers to participate in the ronda. Community members maintain that police are imposed by the government, but the ronda is a traditional way in which community members protect themselves and their community. Today, the ronda is separated into two parts: the ronda comunitaria, which is responsible for patrolling and protecting the community from within its borders, and the guardabosques (forest defenders), which patrol the outskirts of town and deep into the forests to guard the safety of community members living in those more rural areas as well as to protect the forest itself.

Cherán is not the first community in Mexico to return to its traditional means of community self-defense, nor is it the first place in the state of Michoacán or even in the indigenous Purepecha region. Other communities have engaged in similar practices of self-governance and self-defense, and, little by little, more communities are seeing traditional self-governance and self-defense as a viable alternative to corrupt politics and submission to organized crime. Recently, council members from Nurio, Michoacan, a larger community and long-time practitioner of self-governance and self-defense, suggested that the entire Purepecha region should begin to organize a regional ronda that could potentially coordinate self-defense patrols on a regional level for the Purepecha people living throughout Michoacán.

It is hard not to throw your hands up in the air in resignation when you hear about criminals such as HSBC being granted immunity from prosecution and sanctions, but it is even harder not to throw a fist in the air when you see Purepechas successfully overcoming organized crime, corrupt politicians and big business by establishing models for self-determination and self-defense on a community level.

FIRST NATIONS BLOCKADES GRIP CANADA

by Aboriginal Peoples Television Network

Three rail blockades launched in British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario were expected to end by late January sixteenth on a day that saw rallies sweep across the country along with altercations between motorists and protesters. The blockade in Manitoba, which was about 55 miles west of Winnipeg, wound down around 4 p.m. local time, said former Roseau River chief Terry Nelson. In Ontario, a rail blockade launched between Belleville and Kingston, Ontario, by about a dozen Mohawks from Tyendinaga also wrapped up by 7 pm local time. VIA rail said the Mohawk blockade stopped ten trains and impacted 850 travelers. A rail blockade launched by the Gitwangak people of the Gitxsan Nation near Terrace, British Columbia, was also expected to end by 6 pm local time.

The blockades were part of a cross-Canada national day of action planned from British Columbia to Nunavut, Alberta to Nova Scotia. Nelson, who was served with a court injunction, said a group of about 50 people faced temperatures hovering around—31 Fahrenheit with the wind chill.

"We sent a strong message to the business community," said Nelson. "We will be back." Nelson said he plans to challenge the injunction in provincial court, because the blockade was on unceded Treaty One land. "We are not worried about the injunction or the court or anything like that," said Nelson.

Fred Johnson, the spokesman for the Gitwangak people of the Gitxsan Nation that launched the rail blockade near Terrace, said there was a lot of community support for the action.

"It's unfortunate it has come to this point. If [Prime Minister Stephen Harper] and this government were rational and discussed [Bill C-45] prior to pushing it through Parliament, we wouldn't be here today," he said. "One thing it did do is unite First Nations people."

Canadian National Railway spokesperson Jim Feeny said injunctions were obtained against all three blockades, but only those involved in the Manitoba action were served. He said he couldn't comment on whether the two other injunctions would be served.

The day of rallies, protests, blockades and round dances also saw some conflicts between motorists and protesters. In Fort Frances, Ontario, a YouTube video captured a pick-up truck trying to drive through a round dance. The Ontario Provincial Police said the force would investigate the incident. In Edmonton, television cameras also captured a pick-up truck driving through a road blockade. These types of incidents, however, were few.

In Windsor, Ontario, around 1,000 people marched to the Ambassador Bridge, which links the city to Detroit, said filmmaker Monica Virtue. The march reached the foot of the bridge, briefly shutting cross-border traffic down, before the rally was moved to a nearby parking lot.

"It did look very cool. Everyone had the flags out. They were pumping A Tribe Called Red," said Virtue.

"This will be the biggest First Nation event that Windsor has ever seen," said London District Chiefs Council Chair Greg Peters, who spoke to APTN while standing in a parking lot packed with twelve buses of supporters. "We want to send a message that, depending on the numbers, should we decide to shut down the border at a future date that is possible, that it could be done.

In northern Ontario, near Nipigon, First Nations marchers took to the TransCanada Highway. In Miramichi, New Brunswick, marchers took over the Centennial Bridge, and in Fredericton people also crossed the Westmorland Bridge. In Cayuga, Ontario, around 60 people from Six Nations rallied and round-danced at the local court house. A handful of Six Nations people also briefly blocked Highway Six at the Caledonia bypass.

"The Idle No More movement is connecting to the everyday injustices faced by native people when they are dragged through the courts at the hands of the [OPP] when they are standing up for their rights," said organizer Laura Lepper. Lepper said the courthouse rally was partly in support of Theresa Toad Jaimeson, who is facing charges from a February 18, 2012, incident after an "anti-native-rights" activist walked into an area of land in Caledonia that Six Nations reclaimed in 2006. A spokesman for the OPP said earlier in the day that the provincial police force would be focusing on preserving public safety throughout the day.

In Barrie, Ontario, police warned drivers to expect delays as a result of rallies. Members of Alderville First Nation in Ontario slowed traffic along Highway 45, which cuts through their territory. They handed out pamphlets, coffee and juice. In British Columbia, the Pat Bay Highway in Vancouver Island was also blocked temporarily. A highway blockade was also planned near Cardston, Alberta, and in the Lubicon Lake Nation in the same province, traffic slowdowns occurred throughout oil fields in their territory.

"We're not out blocking the roads and shutting things down; we're not at that point," said Lubicon Councilor Bryan Laboucan in a statement. "All we're doing here today is taking a few minutes to talk to people visiting our territory, whether for work or just passing through, and educate them on our situation."

In Whitehorse, Yukon, a 24-hour prayer circle was expected to begin at about 6 p.m. local time. In Toronto, an Idle No More rally unfolded in front of the British consulate. In Ottawa, a flash mob round dance hit the city's downtown. In Iqaluit, a rally was held in the Nunavut capital's Four Corners. A small march occurred in Kanesatake, Quebec, which began at the pines near the cemetery that was once at the centre of the Oka crisis in 1990. The Algonquins of Barriere Lake in Quebec also slowed down traffic on Highway 117 to draw attention to their opposition of forestry projects on their land.

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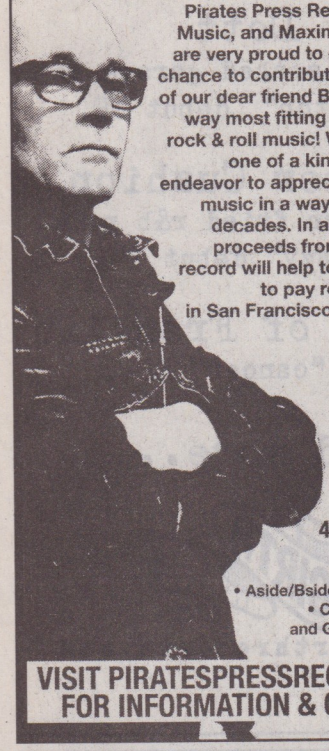

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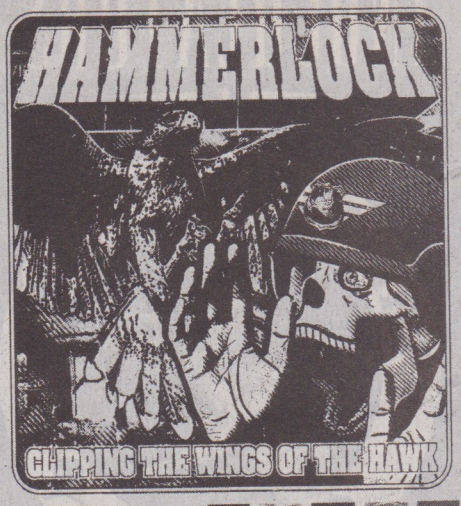

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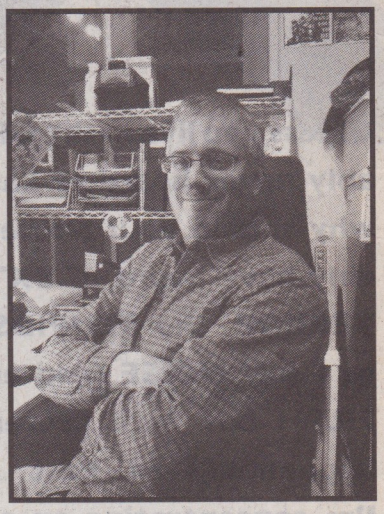
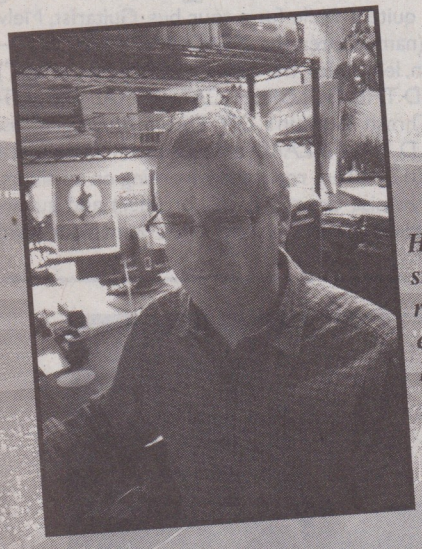
SHITWORKER OF THE MONTH!

Meet Mark Dober everyone, our Shitworker of the month!.



Mark Dober, or Dobes as his friends call him, is originally from Little Rock, Arkansas and relocated to the Bay Area about ten years ago. In his daily life he is a seismologist (hey, who ever said punks weren't smart?) and for the last six years he has been a trusted Maximum Rocknroll shitworker. He is dependable, punctual, cleans up after himself and is always willing to help with whatever help the magazine may need.

Mark did record reviews for a couple of years, and he also used to do our monthly scanning—which is when we scan all the 7-inch and CD album covers for the layouts each month. It is a tedious job but he did it tirelessly for ages!



He now helps with mailorder processing every single week and is in charge of laying out the record (not an easy task!) and zine reviews every month! He also helps out at every New Issue Day, provides distro support and is generally a reliable, hard-working altruist and we wholly appreciate all his hard work!

Mark is a quiet, friendly chap, with a subtle but strong sense of humor. When prompted he will share some pretty amazing stories from growing up in the early '80s hardcore scene. He has fine taste in music and always picks out gems from the MRR record collection to listen to while he processes the online orders (that's all you guys :)

In the past he has played bass in Full Service Quartet and guitar in the Shivering, and he is currently involved in a new Bay Area band project, playing guitar. He is also a soccer fan and when he is not catching games at local pubs or hiking around the beautiful Bay Area, he plays as part of a local soccer team.

So Mark 'Dobes' Dober, THANK YOU for all your diligent work at MRR!

Words by Alan Fresco III.
Pictures by Dave Morris, Raven Lee, Gareth Morgan, Lucy James And Claire 'Beware' Simmons

SCENE REPORT

East Anglia

[Essex / Suffolk Border Area]

Unless you live in the UK, you've probably never heard of East Anglia—and why should you? However, you probably have heard of EXTREME NOISE TERROR, the STUPIDS, the ADICTS or RAW NOISE (and er, CRADLE OF FILTH but we'll pretend that never happened!)—all East Anglia bands. I'm concentrating on a small part of this area that seems to be throwing up a lot of great DIY bands in the last couple of years—the area around the Suffolk/Essex border—so this is by no means a definitive report on the whole East Anglian scene, more a snapshot of some fuckin' lovely people and great bands that are in the thick of it. I moved here around five years ago and have never been part of such an active scene. As you'll see further into the report, it's a pretty close-knit scene with many band members playing in more than one band and some being involved in labels, distros, recording, promoting gigs etc. Anyway, this is what's happenin'...

MEADOWS are a pulverising doom crust outfit from Sudbury/Colchester with some blasting grind thrown into the mix and have been together for a few years now. They released a 4-track CD EP in early 2011 and have since put out a split tape with CHESTBURSTER and a split 12" with London's SLABDRAGGER on Head of Crom records from Macclesfield. Rumours of more releases on various labels abound. They have a few short tours under their collective belt and have the biggest, craziest looking old motorhome I've seen in a quite a while for a tour bus. Guitarist, Melv, runs Pint of Bin Promotions (named after the MEADOWS song, *"Bin"*—"Three parts beer, one part gin, lemon for the ladies, mine's a pint of bin") and plays in HOBOPOPE AND THE GOLDFISH CATHEDRAL and JOTNARR. Drummer Jack runs Thrash Gordon's DIY Distro (*thrashgordons.muncom.com*) and is also in OLD MAN LIZARD, a blues-doom three-piece who released a 4-track EP in 2012 and are reportedly working on an album. MEADOWS is completed by bassist George (Jack's brother) and guitarist, Charlie. Take a look at *meadows1.bandcamp.com* if you want your head smashed in.

The DOMESTICS, from Sudbury/Ipswich got together in summer 2011, although have had a couple of lineup changes, including the addition of Ed Ache (ex-I.C.H.) on second guitar. They play in your face hardcore punk in the vein of BLACK FLAG, POISON IDEA, DISCHARGE, and early CIRCLE JERKS, plus stuff like BRAIN SLUG or MAUSER, but less blown out and with a few weird time signatures here and there to keep people on their toes. Their debut album, *Keep it Lean*, was released jointly by Kibou records and Dusty Curtain Face records in February 2012. They also have a couple of tracks on the *Music to Bleed to Vol. 3* compilation on Infested records in the U.S., a split live tape with CHESTBURSTER (probably sold out by now but you might get lucky) and they are due to release *The G.D.P. E.P – a Six Song* 7" on Kibou records/Runny Bum records in February 2013. Getting known for their short songs, angry delivery (think a British John

Brannon) and impassioned live show, they've played with bands as diverse as WEEKEND NACHOS, REVENGE OF THE PSYCHOTRONIC MAN and the MEMBERS (the MEMBERS didn't like them much by all accounts!). Vocalist James runs Kibou records, whilst bass player, Rhodes, has built up a solid reputation as a DIY recordist, having recorded for many of the bands mentioned in this report (and more). Rhodes is also the main man behind prog-punk (pronk?) outfit, HOBOPOPE AND THE GOLDFISH CATHEDRAL—DOMESTICS guitarist, the legendary Ted Mint, also features. Chris DC makes faces, drives the van and pounds the skins. Hard. They went a mini tour with the excellent JUST ADD MONSTERS (from Basingstoke, Hampshire) in November and now apparently have the touring bug. I caught the last date with VANILLA POD and CASUAL NAUSEA, and it was awesome! See what they're plotting next at *kibourecords.bigcartel.com*.

In typical scene-incest style, Ed from the DOMESTICS has another band (as well as doing acoustic gigs—including the annual Rebellion punk festival in Blackpool) called **CASUAL NAUSEA**, which also features Simon from the now defunct DEAD BATTERIES. They've been around since summer 2012 and play great, spiky hardcore, pogo-style punk rock, reminiscent of CRASS, the CASUALTIES, the BRISTLES and maybe even a bit of IMPERIAL LEATHER, with their two vocalists Simon and Zoe mixing up self-effacing humour and bouncing off the ceiling energy. Some recording is planned (with Rhodes—who else!) for early 2013. Bassist Briggs is involved in the local housing co-op and occasionally puts on gigs in Ipswich (the last one was the So Beautiful Extreme Music Fest I think). Shawn thrashes the kit and wears cool trousers. Ed and his girlfriend, Jess, also run the UK branch of DIY Bandits Distro (check Facebook for that). Try *facebook.com/casualnausea* for updates.

If you can imagine late '70s punk and new wave style tunes played faster and more manically by pissed up wastrels who grew up on grunge, then you've pretty much just imagined the **5 STRING DROPOUT BAND** from Braintree, Essex. Like the DOMESTICS, their songs just stick in your head like glue and the chemistry coming off the stage when these boys play is electric. Basically you get Johnny and Blakey calling each other cunts for most of the set, Murphy thrashing his bass strings into oblivion and Bad Man making some brilliant guitar noise that you don't really notice until the second time you see them (then you realise what a vital part of the sound it is). Holding it all down at the back is Chris, a great drummer who is also in CHESTBURSTER. They have a mini album, *Full Mast at the Casket*, available for free download at *the5stringdropoutband.bandcamp.com*. Again, this was recorded by Rhodes from the DOMESTICS (assume from this point on that most recording referenced in this report have been recorded by Rhodes, that boy gets everywhere!)

CHESTBURSTER, also from Braintree, call themselves hard-*gore*. They're a grindpunk trio who are all self-confessed horror nerds. Most of their songs are based on films—*Vasquez, Karloff, It Got Into my Hand and it Went Bad* and *Date, Mate, Reanimate* are but four examples. They nearly destroyed the tiny V Bar in Colchester a few months ago and, in conjunction with MEADOWS (as MEATBURSTER—see what they did there?!) supported NAPALM DEATH at Colchester Arts Centre. As noted, they have a split tape out with MEADOWS, a split live tape with the DOMESTICS ('the Dombursters') and a CD-R album (in

a DVD case, very fitting) called *They Mostly Come out at Night...Mostly* available. Rob (the brother of drummer, Chris) also plays in the not-especially-punky-but-actually-still-great, EARTHMASS (one of their songs is as long as the DOMESTICS' whole album). The lineup is completed by Lewis (guitar), whom I occasionally see at record fairs when I have the money to go. Their logo is virtually indecipherable—we thought they were called the Stevesters! See *chestburster.bandcamp.com*.

Over in Bury St. Edmunds are **RATS AS BIG AS DOGS**, featuring Jay Hardcore of VOLUNTEERS infamy. For those of you that don't know, VOLUNTEERS were one of the fastest hardcoreiest (yeah, that's a word...I just said so!) to come out of East Anglia a few years back. They were heavily involved in promoting DIY gigs and building up the scene a few years back and have several CDs and slabs of vinyl to their name (you can hear most, if not all, of their back catalogue at *uk.myspace.com/volunteerspunk*) and are playing a one-off (I think) gig in their home town in April 2013 that is getting a lot of people very excited. The DOMESTICS and CHESTBURSTER have been requested as supports, so it'll be one to tell the grandkids about! Anyway, RATS AS BIG AS DOGS I haven't seen yet. They don't seem to play out that much and on the rare occasions they have I've been otherwise engaged, but I'm looking forward to catching them soon. They're quite different from VOLUNTEERS and have an EP available at *ratsasbigasdogs.tumblr.com*. Jay runs an extreme sports shop called Hardcore Hobbies in Bury St. Edmunds so if that's your thing you should drop in.

HOBOPOPE AND THE GOLDFISH CATHEDRAL, as I've already mentioned, include members from several of the other bands in the local scene. They've existed around the nucleus of mainman, Rhodes, for about a decade, having released several CD-R albums in this period. There have been several lineups and there hasn't really been one at all for some time although Rhodes has done a few solo H&TGC gigs (sometimes with a cereal box on his head, no one's sure why). If you define 'punk' as a three chord, 4/4 timing kind of thing then H&TGC won't do anything for you, but if your definition is a little wider and you like stuff like the CARDIACS, TOM WAITS and other wonky pronky sounding stuff you'll probably love the likes of *Insecurity Teeth, Pleasure Beach Massacre or Garden Bastards*. A Maverick. Take a look at *hobopope.com*.

Other bands well worth a mention include the SUGGESTED, a young ska-punk band from Colchester (although I'm not sure if they're still going), YAK ATTACK (not strictly speaking punk but definitely with a DIY approach), the TICKTURDS (boogie-punk?! I really don't know how to describe this lot!), FORCED EXISTENCE (great fast hardcore featuring Dave from DANGERS CLOSE and FALLEN HUMANITY—mid-paced old school punk rock and death-grind bands respectively—he's another busy chap is Dave; he's also in DOGTOWN REBELS and apparently has now joined old timers SPECIAL DUTIES!), The EAST TOWN PIRATES (ex-RED FLAG 77—I've not seen 'em yet but reports suggest they're not as good as RED FLAG 77 were, and in truth I think *they* went downhill years ago!), The FANNY PADS! (who have been going for a few years now—Flocky puts on an annual all dayer in Sudbury), JOTNARR (sort of blackened crust, featuring Melv from MEADOWS and Rollo from THREE THRONES) and THREE THRONES, an instrumental stoner/doom trio who let their crushing riffs do the talking—again, not punk *per se* but with a cool DIY attitude and a love for hardcore which shows in their music. You can pick up their CD EP from *threethrones.bandcamp.com*

The first one-day **WALLOP! FEST** was held in July 2012 at The Royal Oak in Ipswich and put together by Pint of Bin Promotions (Melv from MEADOWS/JOTNARR), Kibou records (James from the DOMESTICS) and Dusty Curtain Face records—now known as Runny Bum records (Rhodes, see above!). Despite having a rich punk and hardcore heritage, Ipswich has been lacking in this regard in recent years. Long gone are the days of local (and international) favourites like THE STUPIDS, EXTREME NOISE TERROR, SCREAMING HOLOCAUST or RAW NOISE playing Ipswich venues (although in fairness the STUPIDS did play PJ McGintys the other year). Anyway, the inaugural WALLOP! FEST (named after the local 'craze'—ok about six people did it—of shouting "wallop!" as a sign of appreciation at gigs) featured WEEKEND NACHOS, the AFTERNOON GENTLEMEN, SHOOT THE BASTARD, LICH, HAMMERS, BLACK VEINS, the DOMESTICS, MEADOWS, LEERES HIRN, THREE THRONES, CHESTBURSTER and SWEATSHOP and was pretty successful, with people travelling considerable distances to see this lineup. WINTER WALLOP! Was held in December 2012 and featured a ton of cool out of town thrashers on the bill, including MAN HANDS, SKY:LARK!, SHUT IN (ex-SELF LOATHING) and FLAT EARTH, plus some local types, like MEADOWS, CHESTBURSTER, JOTNARR etc., plus a one song set from father and (five-year-old) daughter outfit TALKING SLEEVE featuring MATILDA STAR doing a Christmas tune that brought a dampness to many a punks' eye. Not mine though, my heart's made of stone...*cough*

It feels like there is a bit of a divide between the new noise and the old noise in the Ipswich scene in particular. There's quite a bit of what I'd call 'ploddy punk'—you know the kind of thing that sounds really slow and mellow by modern punk/hardcore standards, just like dull pub rock? Those bands don't seem to turn up at the gigs the people in the scene I'm writing about here put on (too noisy, too fast, too heavy, too aggressive I guess) and, to be fair, we don't really go to theirs (too slow, too dull, too obvious, too staid and maybe because they have their little clique and we feel no need to try to infiltrate it, which I suspect they hate!). I dunno, it just doesn't seem that punk to me...

Although the people involved in this scene put gigs on at various venues including *V Bar, the Arts Centre, the Hole in the Wall* and *the Judge and Jury* in Colchester, *the White Horse* and *the Tavern* in Sudbury (and *the Northcroft* before it was closed due to licence breaches... the owners skimped on paying for the correct licence for the upstairs bar and the place got shut down. They were so useless they didn't even get their appeal in on time, the fucking morons. It's been closed for months...a cool venue got lost for the sake of a few hundred quid!), *PJ McGintys* in Ipswich and *St. Anne's Castle* in Great Leighs (it's not an actual Castle, which was a big disappointment the first time I went there but someone told me Henry the Eighth used to own it or work behind the bar or something...I dunno, my history's not that great...). One venue, well, pub, they're nearly all pubs [hey, this is England—ed], deserves a special mention; *the Royal Oak* on the Felixstowe Road in Ipswich. Tammy and Mike handle all the band-related stuff there. They're great people who really look after the bands. They provide food (and often beer) for touring bands, which I understand is fairly common in the U.S. and mainland Europe, but believe me it's not that common in the UK! They book bands themselves or let promoters run their own shows there if there's nothing already booked. It's always a good atmosphere at the Oak and it's rare to see a band play to less than 50 or 60 people – although for something like WALLOP! Or a 'name' touring band this can double quite easily, which these days is a pretty good turnout, especially as the venue is some distance from town. Yeah, they do put on their share of shitty cover bands but it's the punk stuff they really love...I guess they just can't make a living from doing punk bills every night in somewhere like Ipswich (anywhere?!?!). Another place that's worth a visit if you're a young (or old) punk about town is *Out of Time Records* on Fore Street in Ipswich, a true independent that's been going for years. I've picked up some great vinyl in there, they have a great punk section - crust, pop punk, powerviolence, ska-punk, d-beat, UK82...recent purchases for me include INFEST, REAGAN YOUTH and an OP IVY bootleg. Seriously, pay 'em a visit – great records and nice people too. Also, try *Blast Music* in Braintree for records and comics.

It may not be one of the bigger scenes like London or Manchester but there are a shitload of great bands around this area at the moment. The DIY spirit is strong; the people involved are generally cool people who try to support the scene by attending other bands' gigs, picking up some merch here and there and recommending stuff to each other. All the bands are different, some more obviously 'punk' than others, but all share that same DIY spirit and all are enjoying the current uplift in cool, noisy bands in the area. It would be good to have even more people involved than there are now but, being positive, it could build up from this strong base over the next year or two. Of course there are still plenty of people in the area who moan about there being no scene, but are rarely, if ever, seen at a gig. However, those kinds of people are everywhere—they won't travel a mile to see three or four great bands for the price of a beer, but will pay a fortune to go and see a 'name' band in London. It's depressing but what can you do? So yeah, like a lot localised scenes all over the world, the Suffolk/Essex one is only as strong as the bands and people that are involved and working hard to keep things moving and at the moment this scene is pretty strong. I urge you to check out some of the bands mentioned, contact them, arrange a reciprocal gig or tour with them, co-ordinate a split release with them, interview them for your zine, whatever...keep the DIY scene alive and kicking home and abroad. Over and out.

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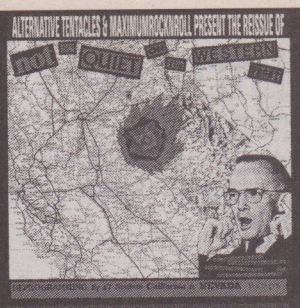

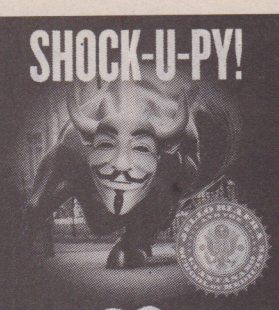

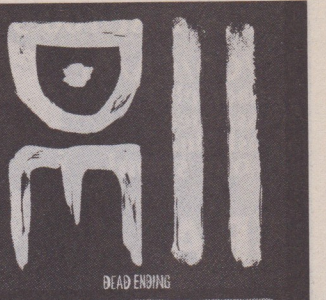

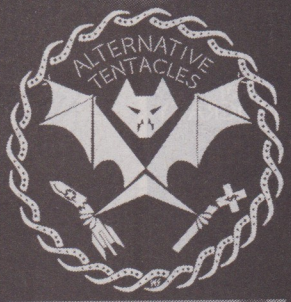

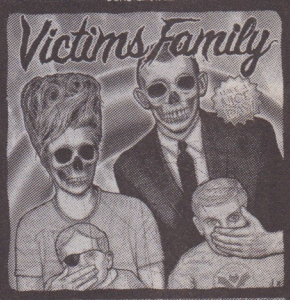

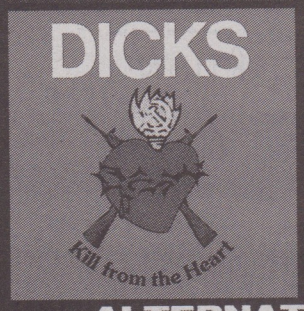

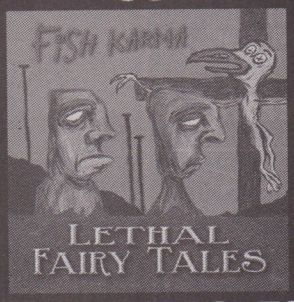

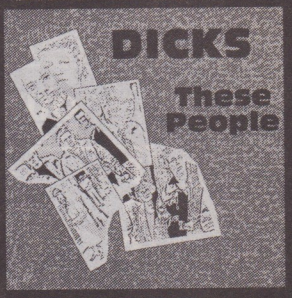

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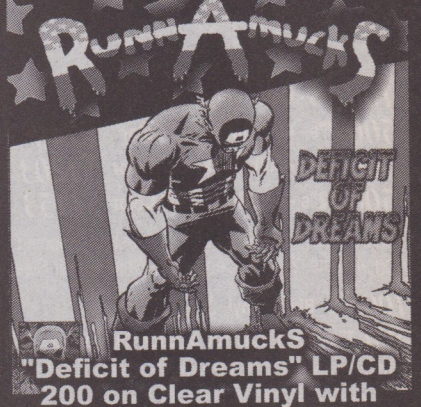

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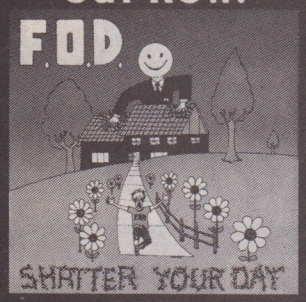

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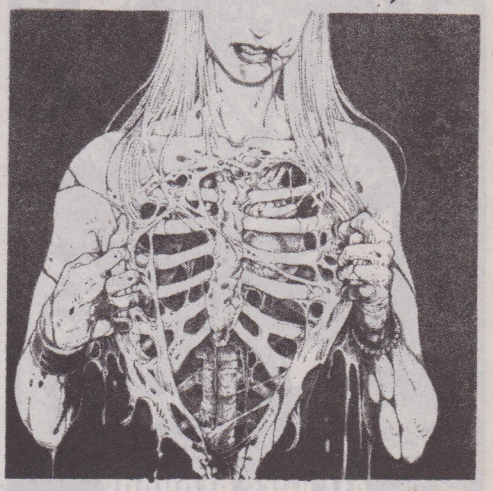

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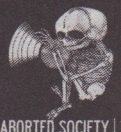

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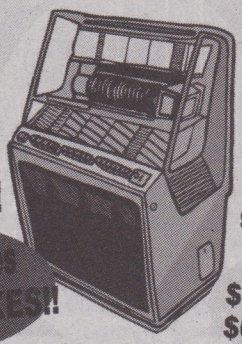

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Brontez Purnell

To each of Brontez Purnell's creative endeavors he brings the perspective of a Southerner, a queer, a POC and perhaps most significantly, a punk. Whether in his capacity as a writer, a musician, an actor or a dancer, Purnell brings a wealth of experience that lends every project his singular character. At times divisive and brash, it's his flippant disregard for the sensibilities of his prospective audience—his integrity—that qualifies Purnell as a vital modern artist. Interview by Sam Lefebvre. Photos by Danielle Nicoletta.

MRR: You said to me, "I don't want to sell out, I want to get paid!" How do you navigate financial motivation and artistic aspirations? In other words, where do you draw the line between "selling out" and just eking a living out from your work?

I feel like a poser answering this question because I know for a fact that I'm not the caliber of artist who could realistically sell out. I mean, Younger Lovers is cute, it's catchy, but in terms of a business model for a band, we're not really that marketable. Here is a band authored by a loud-mouthed, not very well behaved faggot. It's not really what America wants to see or is prepared for, and honestly, I'm sometimes afraid to think about what I would have to do to make myself palatable to a large audience. We got paid 600 bucks once to do a Vitamin Water ad, and it was kind of weird. They followed us around, asked a lot about the Oakland scene and then we cashed the check and spent it on drugs. I know some "professional" bands and what they have to do to "make it" is usually this grueling thing that doesn't really interest me. I would like to tour more, but it seems like to tour you have to hire someone to book the tour for it to make money. I've tried that route and most bookers won't even call me back. Also, you have to hire a PR person and other shit—that is if you care at all about making enough money to live on after tour. Not to sound like sour grapes, but being that I've struggled in making music, I usually have to constantly think of other avenues. I generally think of ways to work smarter, not harder. In my head, my goal is to have the Lovers be a twenty-year band project. If we make some bucks along the way, I'm down with that too.

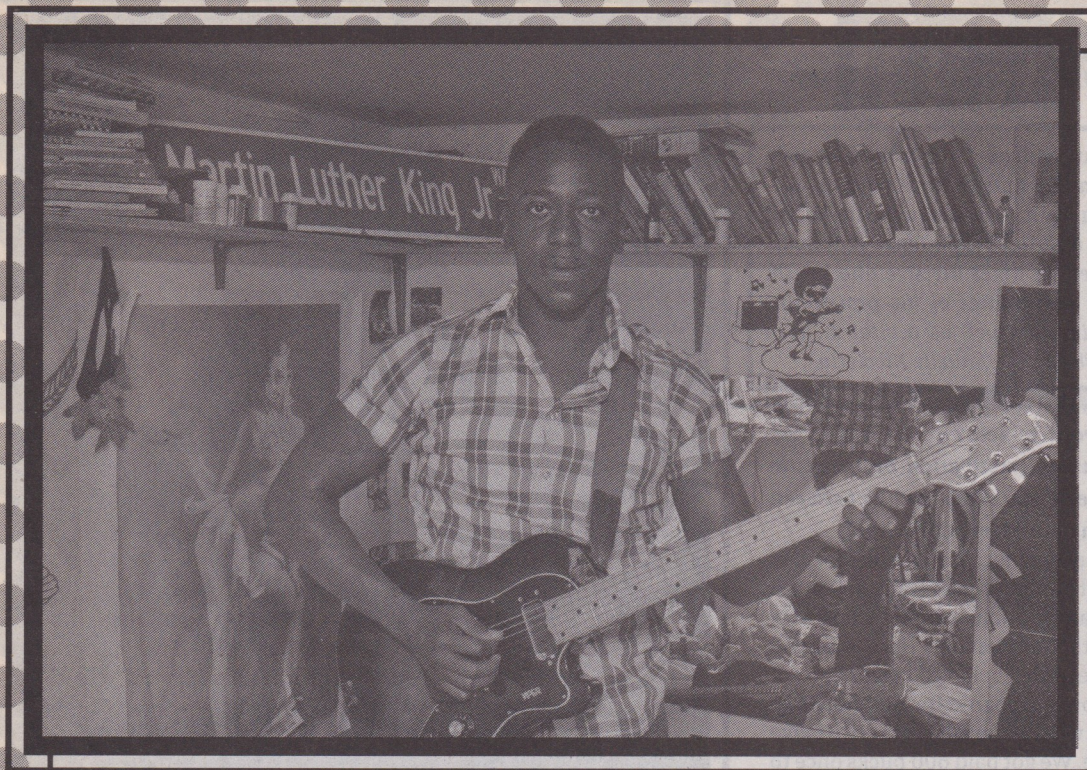
Actually, let me be clear. I would fucking love to make money off of my music, but on the other side of all my whiney bullshit is the fact that I'm personally proud of my struggle in making music. I came to California with 60 bucks and no focused ambition, but now I really feel like an artist, whatever that means. I feel like I've talked enough shit and put in enough work to where I have a patch of land to stand on—not a huge patch, but it's mine. I look up now and I'm on the third Younger Lovers LP, and I think, "What the fuck? How did I do that?!" Some people I know have played in bands for years and have never seen vinyl. So, I think shit talking is necessary, but I'm also trying to be aware without getting too caught up on making money and business models. Ninety-nine percent of the musicians I know have never made a real fucking dime off of their music, yet continue to do it! Some of them for twenty or more years. It's inspiring. I try to keep a balanced perspective because, honestly, though I've flirted with the idea, I don't make music to be rich or famous really. I make music to keep from killing myself.

It's also about having a wish to live well, being broke, being misunderstood, having a sense of humor, being angry, trying, fucking up, fucking up, fucking up, sometimes succeeding and, honey, that's just the first five paragraphs...

MRR: I think a lot of people would disagree with you regarding having to use a booking agent and PR person to successfully tour. Punk bands are constantly touring autonomously of the larger "music biz" institutions. Why isn't that practical for the Younger Lovers?

Good point. I guess the loaded term in that would be "successful." My friend Justin and I, he used to be in the Clorox Girls, did a reading together recently. He's a writer now and we were talking about touring and how smaller bands eat shit all of the time while on tour. Money is funny and gas is through the roof these days, so unless you inherited a van or have a lax rent situation in which you can leave for a month, cover your rent and still have a job, then touring without some kind of back up that ensures someone will be at your shows could be an unsustainable thing—or, the type of thing I see is that even the most hardcore DIY mofos are getting burned out on all the time. To clarify, the Younger Lovers have only done a handful of tours, other than England, nothing too big and have never had either booking or PR.

It's a hard call for me sometimes. I don't really want to say that I would never do that again. In fact, I would have to do it again, because we don't have PR or booking agents knocking on our door, you know? Also, and most importantly, we don't have the money for it either! I don't want to be a gooch and say that I would never do an unpromoted van tour ever again, but I have to say that the idea of showing up in the Pacific Northwest or LA and playing to three people makes me pause. I want more. It's not good enough for me anymore to say, "Okay, we booked it, and we showed up, job done, mission accomplished." I want things that are beyond just surviving. But even if I didn't get those things, I would still make music.



MRR: What compelled you to exclude your live band from the recording process on earlier releases? Was it practical, or was it artistically motivated?

It's both, though I've had band mates play on some stuff. Well, in the beginning I didn't even have a band! It was an army of me. I wrote the first Younger Lovers song in 2003 after Panty Raid was kaput and I never really intended for it to be a band, just a recording project. A couple of years earlier, I was living in Alabama and this boy I was fooling around with turned me onto the Potential Johns and told me that that guy recorded all of the stuff himself. I always wanted to experiment with that form. I had always been in bands and wanted, if just for one project in my life, to know what it was like to have something supremely tailored to my taste. It was always my intention to do three LPs and then see what happened with it. Looking back, I'm glad I did it like that.

Younger Lovers have gone through more drummers than I can think of and had a wide cast of people. Between my crazy schedule and my craziness in general, I can't think of a time when it would have been easy to get everyone on the same page enough to record a whole album. One thing I've always had a hard time with is the drum sounds. I like a good hard beat that bops, like one you can more or less dance to, but most drummers in the pop punk realm take a 4/4 beat to this weird Green Day tempo, whereas for the Younger Lovers it has to be somewhere in between Elvis Costello and Gino Washington for the intention to hold. It's been an uphill battle and will continue to be, but ultimately one that's worth it. I wouldn't take anything over my journey now.

MRR: You are travelling to England next year to record under your own name and not the Younger Lovers moniker. Do you have separate goals for this solo recording than with the Younger Lovers?

It's not so separate really, but once something is under a band name, it has a different set of credibility, liability and accountability. Also, I keep getting gray hairs, and I'm old, crabby and becoming increasingly more indigent in my approaching spinsterhood. This said, Younger Lovers could one day become an intense branding for a future old lady, but at the same time I could never be like, "Brontez and the Younger Lovers." Or maybe I could?

MRR: You're about to debut your first book. How has your writing experience as a (former?) columnist in MRR and publisher of Fag School culminated in this larger work?

After years of writing and making mistakes, you get into a groove. If you had told me, even a year and a half ago, that I'd finish a novel, I wouldn't have believed you. I still write for *MRR*, but I've taken a break to complete my novel. I was essentially glad to work out my form in front of punks, and was surprised to find out that weird straight punks seemingly have an easier time digesting stories about dangerous gay sex than a lot of mainstream gay media. It's sometimes a trip finding out who your people are.

MRR: Do you want your novel to appeal to "mainstream gay media," or is it written for punks? Who do you envision your audience to be, and are you specifically writing to them?

As far as appealing to mainstream gay media, I could say that I want that, but I'm dubious of what it would look like. I think I have (as Justin Bond coined) a very "boutique" audience. I specifically wrote that book for rockers, deviants, optimists and yes, punks.

MRR: Dance, film, music, writing—you've been involved in an array of mediums, over the last couple of years more than ever. Has this led to a preference for particular ones over others? Do you find different media more effective for expressing yourself?

They all give me different things. It became apparent to me early on when doing the Younger Lovers that I could never be happy just being a dude in a band. I've always loved dance; even from age five I've thought of myself as a dancer.

When I was five, I sat my father down in the living room and acted out scenes from Flashdance! Now I'm a dancer who lives in a warehouse! Just like Alex from Flashdance! Although, these days, performance-wise, I'm more in the "post-modern/factual/physical theatre" realm of dance, or what I consider to be the "punk" realm of dance. Ain't none of that So You Think You Can Dance bullshit that makes me barf going on in my theater. I ultimately see myself as a communicator and dance music and writing are all connected to me in this, dare I say, "holy" way. Whatever medium I'm working in at the time, it is informed by these other two. I feel lucky that I've been able to investigate my passions for them. I think everyone should be doing more than one thing.

MRR: What qualifies "post-modern/factual/physical theater" as "punk theatre" to you?

I know, right? Maybe sometimes I overuse the term "punk." I don't think that dance and music should be separate worlds. I forget that the term in and of itself has its own limits and trappings, but I mean punk in terms of a radical shift. Modern dance was born in the fringe and lives in the fringe. There were these people post

World War II who wanted to reinvent the notion of what dance was. Modern Dance in and of itself was supposed to be a radical response to ballet.

Then, when Modern started to become hyperstylized, they wanted all of that stripped of its affections, too. The question was, then, whether you could put a "dancer" on stage, have him perform a task and have it be something as interesting as a dancer doing twenty pirouettes in row? This is the question post-modern/factual/physical theater asks. Its willingness to be a forever-experimental form is what punk is about to me.

There was this lady from the Bay Area named Yvonne Rainer who was kind of a big name in that scene in the '60s. I just read Feelings are Facts, her autobiography, and one juicy document of that time was her infamous "No Manifesto" for dance. I disagree with parts of it. It's snarky to all hell and critics blasted her for it, but to me it has this proto-punk feel. These were some of the movements in art that led up to the explosion of the idea that we could take art in our own hands. It goes:

No to spectacle.
No to virtuosity.
No to transformations and magic and make-believe.
No to the glamour and transcendency of the star image.
No to the heroic.
No to the anti-heroic.
No to trash imagery.
No to involvement of performer or spectator.
No to style. No to camp.
No to seduction of spectator by the wiles of the performer.
No to eccentricity.
No to moving or being moved.

MRR: As an outspoken individual on social issues related to being queer and POC, have you found the scenes related to different mediums of art more or less judgmental or difficult to work in than others regarding those issues?

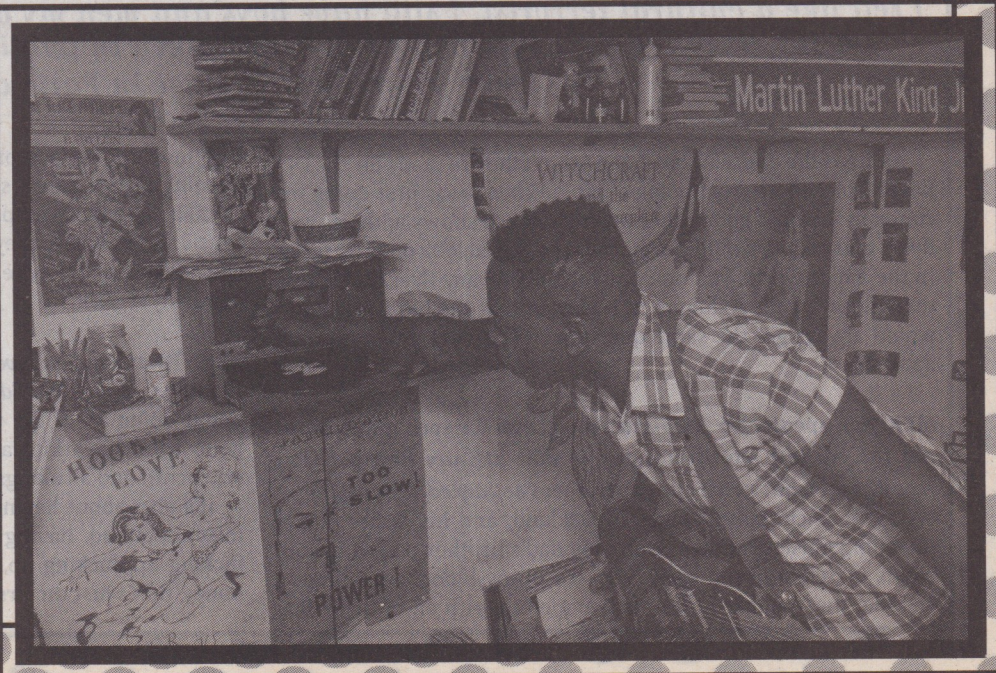
It's hard. I've always felt an affinity for rock'n'roll. It feels like the most revolutionary thing for me to play, you know? But when you get down to it, garage rock can be full of dicks and a lot of stiff, normal white dudes trying to really live up to that pristine, clean, all-American ideal. It's gross. It's not always a freak scene. I prefer my white boys to be druggy, pervy and/or out of control and/or also tender. I feel like rock'n'roll should have danger and, call me old fashioned, but I want a scene laced with some drug addicts, homosexuals and hella rockers—but most importantly and above all, dedicated artists. That's the only way to have fun. But I still feel disconnected. All my black fag buddies who are rappers—well, both of them—are blowing up right now and I can't even get a booker to call me back! Shit, fuck, Jesus! Not that I want to be a rapper, but fuck if I haven't been tempted! I'm kidding.

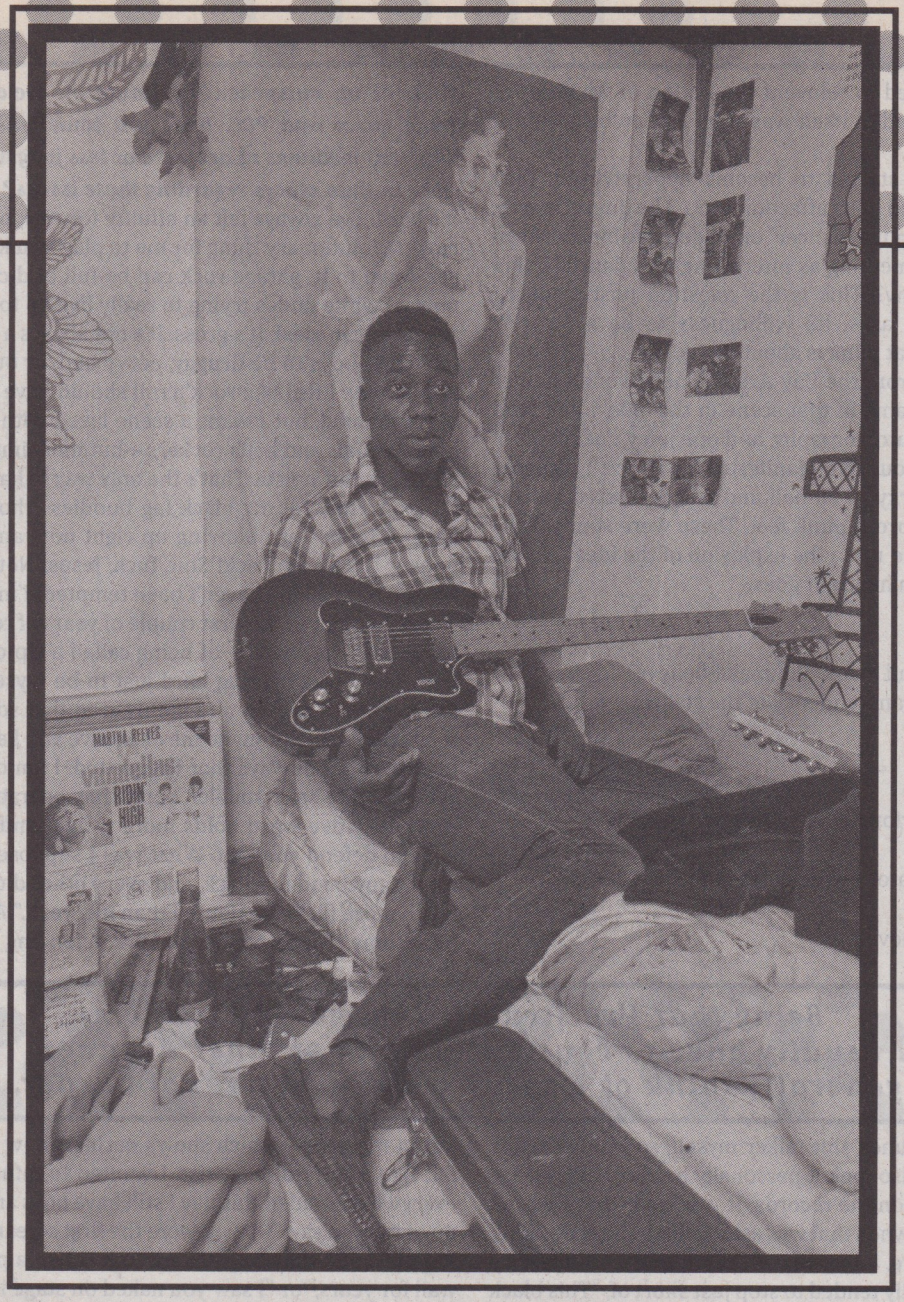
I remember in the first couple of years of reviews I could never move past the shadow of being called a rip-off or "high novelty." I felt like I was fighting hard just to be myself. It was good that I know how I'm built and am used to that sort of thing. I took it really personally, it made me defensive and I ended up lashing out in interviews in ways that I regretted. I am only human, though. When you're in a smaller band that operates under the radar, every negative word holds more weight and it's hard when you have to defend yourself. What was I supposed to say? "Oh, yeah, totally, my band is whack, and every other dick with a guitar is so much more fucking talented than me, yeah." As fucking if! I didn't have some PR person in New York defending me.

Being that I've struggled in making music,
I usually have to constantly think of other avenues.
I generally think of ways to work smarter, not harder.

Also, I'm a pretty staunch shit talker myself, so I didn't really need one, to be clear. I also took it personally because the release date was always tagged on the records. It was clear that I wasn't ripping off anybody, but when that was established, and they didn't have that ammo anymore, it was like, "Um, well, what can we say about him now?" It usually tended to stop just short of, "This black fag playing garage..." What the fuck? I always feel cheated by that because, honestly, my ear is to the street. I've heard/seen bullshit get praised that doesn't slap nearly as hard as mine on the daily. So, it's ultimately taught me not to listen to many motherfuckers. Especially ones that want to roast and gag a bitch.

Now in Gravy Train, it was weird to see how homophobia and people's generally racial shit could play out in what was seemingly an eclectic and diverse band. Not surprisingly, people would say some dumb shit on message boards. Luckily, I was hanging out with Gay Shame at the time and was prepared for people's bullshit. When I took that stage in panties/jock strap/completely naked, I think some people thought I was just being cute and sassy, but in my head—which shows perhaps how crazy I really am—I felt like a cultural terrorist. I wanted to infuse my lil' gay germs everywhere, and to this day I still have boys and men my age come up to me and say, "Oh you were the first screaming fag I saw naked in public and that inspired me," or, "I had a picture of you on my wall for years," or "I saw you naked on stage in Paris once!"





Now that's all rad, but then there is always the contrasting side of things. I'm always trying to pinpoint my legacy in that band because I feel like half of the time I was meeting awesome, powerful queers and cool rockers, and the other half I was meeting clueless-ass trendoids who didn't care about politics, queerness, blackness, rock'n'roll, creating a scene or the politics of "the other." They just wanted to get fucked up and show up, which is fine I guess—whatever... Oh girl, don't get me started on why I fucking hate rock'n'roll sometimes, alongside the fact that playing rock'n'roll saved my life.

Area garage acts, but no one ever talks about, or asks me about how much coming from The Region, i.e. the Deep South, influenced my rock. It influenced me more than anything else. If I hadn't been a highly impressionable young punk in Chattanooga, smoking pot and listening to power pop records with Mike Pack of Future Virgins, I might be a different person. But, that was a big year for me, and looking back critically, that planted the seeds for the Younger Lovers in this big way. There's also other shit, like that time I was five and in a rock'n'roll dance contest at the Grand Old Opry.

MRR: What is the goal of the Brontez Purnell Dance Company video project, and when do you expect it to debut?

I felt like a cultural terrorist. I still have boys and men my age come up to me and say, "Oh you were the first screaming fag I saw naked in public and that inspired me," or "I saw you naked on stage in Paris once!"

As far as the dance world, I don't think they're ready for the DIY flavor I picked up from being a punk. When I was first doing my company, I would go to other people's dance shows with xeroxed flyers and people would get the most confused look on their faces. In the dance world, you do not hand anyone any flyer that is less than glossy print, goddamn it. I learned that the hard way and I would always get the same question: "Oh, so are you a hip-hop dancer?"

MRR: You speak of a deep-seated affinity for rock'n'roll. What are the earliest manifestations of that affinity that you can recall, and what artists or experiences solidified that affinity? My great uncle played blues in Oakland, and his father was a travelling musician down South. My dad's brother played in soul bands in Selma in the early '70s. It's in my blood. Sometimes I feel like the Younger Lovers is clumped in with all of these Bay

The movie Free Jazz premiers in the spring alongside my first evening length dance show called The Glamour Rituals. I want to take my dance company out of stuffy dance theatres and into music shows where they belong. I'm having a hard time, though. I call bookers and they're like, "You want to book a punk rock dance company?" Click.

MRR: What can you reveal about the book you've nearly finished? It's called *Johnny Would You Love Me If My Dick Were Bigger?* It's about doing all of the wrong things, with vigor. It's also about being a punk, working at a restaurant, being a dancer, having HIV, witchcraft and all alongside having a death wish.

It's also about having a wish to live well, being broke, being misunderstood, having a sense of humor, being angry, trying, fucking up, fucking up, fucking up, sometimes succeeding and, honey, that's just the first five paragraphs, okay?

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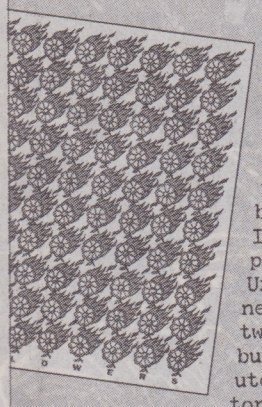

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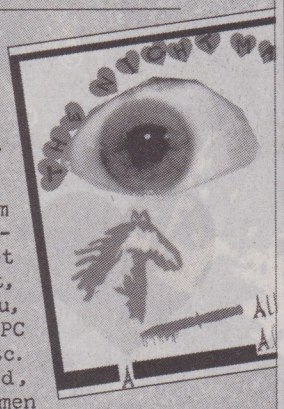

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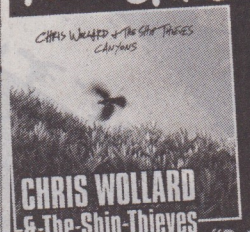

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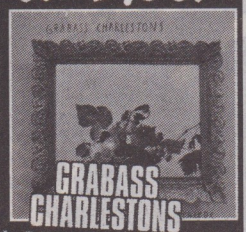

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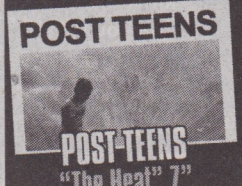

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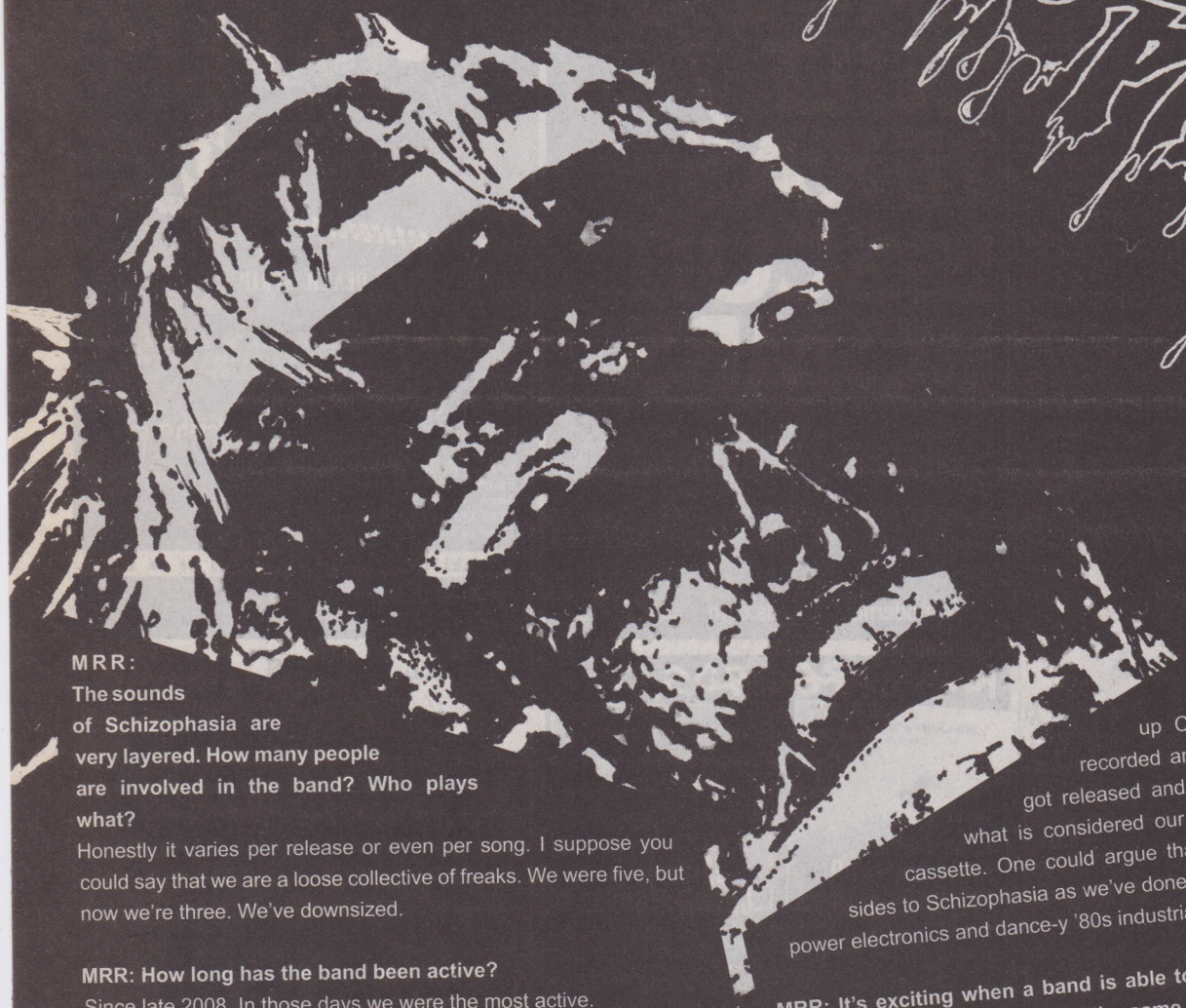
Schizophasia



MRR: The sounds of Schizophasia are very layered. How many people are involved in the band? Who plays what?

Honestly it varies per release or even per song. I suppose you could say that we are a loose collective of freaks. We were five, but now we're three. We've downsized.

MRR: How long has the band been active?

Since late 2008. In those days we were the most active.

MRR: There is some live Schizophasia footage on the Internet and it only seems like there are one or two people playing. Do you play live often? What is the line-up and does it vary from show to show?

I've seen live footage on YouTube, but there's more than one person playing! We don't play live too often, as we hate rehearsing. We've played in Ottawa in 2010 with DAAD and MPW. That gig was recorded and released as a split lathe cut 7" with MPW. A year later we played in Ottawa again with Cross Stitched Eyes and Dekoder. We subsequently played in Gainesville, Florida with Disable, Ectoplasm, and the Holy Mountain. The week after we played in Montreal with bands like Ripper and Spectres. A year later, in 2012, we played in Richmond, VA with Wankys, Zyanose, Chaos C.H., Truncheons, Merciless Game, Pissheads, Orgasm, Stupid Noize and Disable. The reason we don't play too often is that the crowd gets angry.

MRR: There are two sides to Schizophasia: the noise punk and then just noise! What did you start playing first?

In 2007 there was a half recorded demo by a pre-Schizophasia band, that got lost when recording gear got stolen from our compound. It was straight up Confuse style. In 2008 we recorded an ambient demo that never got released and then switched to punk for what is considered our first release, the *Nonsens* cassette. One could argue that there are more than two sides to Schizophasia as we've done punk, ambient, harsh noise, power electronics and dance-y '80s industrial.

MRR: It's exciting when a band is able to explore different musical styles while still sounding like the same band. Was it an intentional choice to experiment with different styles, or did it happen naturally?

I suppose you could say it came quite naturally seeing as we heavily rely on improvisation; our music isn't so much calculated and rehearsed. There's a basic idea, then it's put to tape. It comes out sounding spontaneous and honest that way. We like to think that we're more concerned with sound than actual songs.

MRR: The second and third demos play as one long track. How did you record these demos?

All of our releases generally bleed into each other, but aren't necessarily recorded one after the other. Sometimes it's studio magic, but for the most part, the noise never stops.

MRR: Do you record all the material the same way?

The formula has been the same since day one. It's very organic and totally unrehearsed.

MRR: The first song on the first demo, "No Digitize" expresses a fear of

the digital age we are living in. What do you think about computers and other digital gadgets like smart phones?

The song evokes the idea that digital media could easily just disappear when not backed by a hard copy. It's not necessarily against modern technology. The problem with gadgets and high tech stuff is that it's pushed by those in power and used as a social control tool instead of pushing humanity towards true progress.

MRR: You did a split with now defunct band H.O.P.E (Humans Off Planet Earth) from Ottawa. Your side is all covers of Ottawa bands. What is the scene like in Ottawa right now? Do Schizophasia have a following in their hometown?

We covered local bands that where around 2003 to 2008-ish. I don't think anyone in those bands cared for our covers or even heard them. Not many Schizophasia fans in our hometown. I think our local gigs have only left people confused and perplexed. A lot of people come out to gigs, but it seems people aren't genuinely interested in music.

MRR: There seems to be an apocalyptic motif with the band. When do you think the world will end?

Well the world should have ended December 21st 2012, but after calculating the average date in which post apocalyptic movies are set in, I'd say 2019 is the year we'll all be fighting for gas and water on the desolate highways and squatting empty burnt down businesses. Luckily, the punx already live that way, so for once we might have an advantage.

MRR: Are movies a source of inspiration for Schizophasia?

Yes. Every song on *1000*, *2000*, *3000*, the split with Self Surgery, and other releases are about post apocalyptic movies. It's kind of nerdy, but shit's real.

MRR: What is your favorite apocalypse movie?

Some of them really stand out like *Cherry 2000*, *Steel Dawn*, *Defcon4*, *Blood of Heroes*, *Interzone*, *Land of Doom*, *2019: After the Fall of New York*, *Waterworld*, etc... *Mad Max 2: The Road Warrior* is probably the best one. It's genre defining.

MRR: Have you ever been approached for, or thought of scoring movies?

In the early days there was brief talk about some zombie movie, but the small time production was flakey.

MRR: All of the vinyl releases have Arabic looking writing for the track listings. Why?

The English language got boring, as did "Noise Punk" aesthetic. I'm sick of tons of bands copying Atrocious Madness or Gloom graphics and scribbling punks drinking 40s or puking. The word Schizophasia is a speech disability where the words in a sentence are uttered in the wrong order, using wrong grammar etc. It's the way a lot of noise punk bands have lyrics, because A) they're from Japan and try to sing in English or B) they wish they were from Japan and didn't know English. We parodied that, but simultaneously furthered that writing style to its extreme while still conveying a message, essentially stripping down lyrical content straight to the point. It's very linear, yet cut up.

MRR: The cover of the first 7" is a photo of some weird looking grim reaper characters. Where does this image come from?

It's a band photo next to our old rehearsal space in Hull, Quebec. Point and shoot, simple as that.

MRR: Who releases your material? Do you record albums and find someone to release it for you or do you wait until you have offers?

We get a large amount of offers and that's when we decide to make a release. We also have a large number of labels flaking out on us! We're totally cursed! Fabian Medina from Los Angeles' record label Damaging Noise is one of those guys. He released our first 7" and then shortly after was to release our second LP *2000*. Test presses were made. After a year of no contact, and getting complaints from people all over saying that they never got their records from this guy, we told him to fuck off and die when he attempted to contact us after avoiding us for so long. People like him are parasites to the punk scene and should be ostracized and ejected. We have also had many problems with record labels giving up on releasing our record because no pressing plant will cut our records because there's too much high frequency and they're afraid it will damage their record lathe. Schizophasia has had a string of bad luck.

MRR: Did you have any specific ambitions in starting this band? Have they been reached?

We want to push the boundaries of hardcore punk and sound itself, while not dabbling into self-indulgent bullshit or becoming some sort of indie rock band. A goal we haven't reached is to record in a decent studio. So far all our efforts are totally DIY. We would really benefit from a quality studio. Look at noisy recordings from let's say Jesus and Mary Chain: the production on *Psychocandy* is incredible!

MRR: What are some important records that have influenced your sound that you think people should listen to?

Hawkwind's *In Search of Space* and *Doremi Fasol Latido* because of the ultra textured psychedelia. It makes you feel as though you're about to launch into space!

Jesus and Mary Chain's *Psychocandy*, it's the most distorted record ever made and has a catchy beat to it. Confuse's *Stupid Life*, this is musical insanity! This is their most underrated record!

Skinny Puppy's *Remission* and *Bites*, pure unabridged hatred you can dance your pants off to. Lebenden Toten's eight inch, their best release! S.P.K.'s *Information Overload Unit*, ear scrapping noise that is punk as fuck. Chaotic Dischord's *Don't Throw it all Away*, this has some really nihilistic tracks with total fuck off vocals.

MRR: What is next for Schizophasia?

Two new LPs in 2013.

Discography:

2008 – *Nonsens* cassette
2008 – *Sadists of the Earth's Inferno* cassette
2009 – *Raise the Dead* CD-R
2009 – split with H.O.P.E. cassette
2010 – *One* 7"
2010 – *Two* 7"
2010 – split with No Refund/Facts/Harsh Supplement cassette
2010 – split with Self Surgery cassette
2011 – split with MPW 7"
2011 – *1000* LP
2011 – *2000* LP/cassette
2011 – *3000* LP/cassette
2012 – *One and Two* cassette
2013 – *4000* LP
2013 – *5000* LP

YEAR END TOP TENS OF 2012

Traditionally, we invite our reviewers, columnists and other shitworkers to give us their Top Ten of the year. This year we decided to ask a slew of punks from all over the world to give us their opinion, hoping that we could all share some insight into punk in our own corners of the world and outside of our own scenes.

DAN GOETZ

I feel like 2012 was one of the best years for punk records in recent memory, and a lot of my favorites seem to have come from already good bands that completely outdid themselves with the merit of their vinyl output. I'm sure I didn't hear or am forgetting about some ragers that would've made it, but here's what I did hear that made my year.

LPS (AND ONE 10")

1. SICK FIX – "Vexed" 12" (A389)
I've seen this band a ton of times, though for the most part their recorded output has fallen considerably short of the intensity of their live show. With this LP, they have actually gotten a proper recording that captures their live presence, and Michelle's topical lyrics and explanations are a rare example of this being an asset—and in this case, downright moving—as opposed to an embarrassment.

2. SCHOOL JERKS – LP (Grave Mistake / Bad vibrations)
The raw vocals and instrument tones alone make it nearly worthy of the #1 spot, but this is their best stuff yet, after some hit or miss 7"s. If you haven't yet heard this band, start here.

3. WALLS – "The Future is Wide Open" LP (Iron Lung)
Simply put, this record listens like being lost at sea, or in the wilderness. I had to work both times they played the Bay Area in 2012, otherwise I'm sure they'd be in my top ten live sets.

4. SLICES – "Still Cruising" LP (Iron Lung)
Great record that offers up a little bit of everything. I was expecting a rock record from the first song, but was taken for a ride that did not disappoint. Bummed I missed their show here with WALLS.

5. BUKKAKE BOYS – LP (Sorry State)
After a decent 7" and a great split with AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER, this LP kills it. Check out this month's reviews for more.

6. SICKOIDS – LP (Residue)
A great record that listens like an updated *Zen Arcade*.

7. BOSTON STRANGLER – "Primitive" LP (Fun With Smack)
I'm always wary of bands that get this much attention, especially if they come from places and contain people with name recognition. But goddamn if they don't fuse together everything that's great about the X-Claim catalog, and make it their own creation, all fronted by someone who sounds more than a little like the singer of the ABUSED.

8. NO STATIK – "Everywhere You Aren't Looking" LP (Prank)
One of the best bands in the Bay Area puts out their best record yet. The song that takes up an entire side is downright haunting.

9. WHITE LUNG – "Sorry" 12" (Deranged)
Not quite on the same level as *It's the Evil*, but it's hard for this band to do wrong. As long as they stay the fuck away from *Vice*.

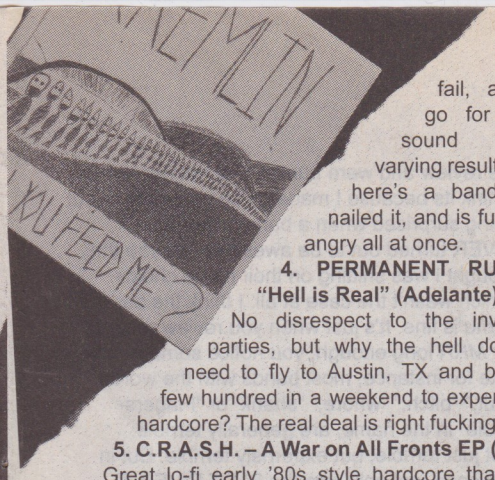
10. BIRTH DEFORMITIES – "Suburbanized" 10" (Cowabunga)
Number ten is a ten-inch. Paranoid bummer punk for when you're fed up with the popular posers that make up your local "hardcore scene."

7"S

1. NO TOLERANCE – "No Remorse, No Tolerance + demo" 12" (Quality Control HQ)
It took moving to the Bay Area and rescinding my own edge (though I'm 100% sober at this point) to develop an appreciation for the intolerant side of straightedge, as in the type that doesn't stick to listening to Bridge Nine bands and goofily putting Xs at the beginning and end of arbitrary words, and NO TOLERANCE musically represents this side of things better than anyone. This 7" tops the demo/first 7", is faster and they are rumored to come out west with the RIVAL MOB in 2013. Someone please write into the letters section confirming or denying this.

2. WILD MOHICANS – "Police Violence/ Drunk Alone" (self-released)
Two mid-paced distorted blasts that are just gripping. Hope to see more recording and touring from this band in 2013.

3. NO SIR, I WON'T – "More Politicians/No Party System" (Destroy Me)
Dan from SURRENDER moved to Boston and started this band, and they sound a helluva lot like CRASS. Many attempt their aesthetic and



fail, a few go for their sound with varying results and here's a band that nailed it, and is fun and angry all at once.

4. PERMANENT RUIN – "Hell is Real" (Adelante)
No disrespect to the involved parties, but why the hell do you need to fly to Austin, TX and blow a few hundred in a weekend to experience hardcore? The real deal is right fucking here.

5. C.R.A.S.H. – A War on All Fronts EP (PPM)
Great lo-fi early '80s style hardcore that falls somewhere between *Flex Your Head* and Kill Rock Stars.

6. THEE NODES – "Stage Dive" EP (self-released)
Absolutely killer raw garage punk, fronted by a guy who mummifies his face when they play.

7. CRIMINAL CODE – "Sacred Hands" EP (Inimical)
This band put out three(?) records this year, all of which are good, but this one is the best.

8. KREMLIN – "Will You Feed Me?" EP (Hardware)
TOTALITÄR meets *Cows and Beer*. What more do you want?

9. BIG EYES – "Back From the Moon/I Don't Care about Friday Night" (Grave Mistake)
I love the FASTBACKS, especially *And His Orchestra*, and this band reminds me of them more than just a bit.

10. NOOSE – "The War of All Against All" EP(React!)
To be honest, I often turn up the pitch adjust when I listen to this record, because it's not *quite* fast enough, but most straightedge hardcore is not this raw and raging. And I may not agree with everything that Bucky says, but I'm damn glad someone is taking unpopular stances in 2013.

Top five live sets (all local this year): **DOUBLE NEGATIVE** at the Swamp, **SCEPTRES** at Subversion Fest, **INDEX** at Casa Sanchez, **THEE INDOORS** at the Swamp, **PERMANENT RUIN** at Subversion Fest*LAYLA 2012*
I was going to put a list of sevens and twelves and tapes but it didn't work out that way. I liked

YECAL INSERVIBLES

Hi, I'm Yecal from Inservibles and a friend I run the Cintas Pepe label. I am from Mexico City, a place that you would imagine has a "scene" and interested people, but that's really far from the reality. This place sucks and it is hard to do shit. The cool people of MRR *asked me for a Top Ten of my favorite records of the year. Since we don't have any record stores or distros down here, I'm talking about the few records I was lucky enough to buy. I'm sorry I didn't reach the ten records as I was asked, but I couldn't buy that many records. Just a friendly reminder: Hey friends from Europe, Australia and USA, don't take your scene for granted. You are lucky. ¡VIVA EL PUNK!*

SUDOR – "Cruces de Cables" EP (Solo Para Punks / Beat Generation)
Some people still have the idea this record was just an out takes record and didn't pay the proper attention it deserves. First of all, "Sin Novedad En Las Cloacas" is the perfect ESKORBUTO-style song. Los MONJO have to forgive me for saying this, but as much as I love them, this time SUDOR reached the ESKORBUTO perfection with this anthem. This single song is enough for loving this record. Second, if you are a monolingual person, this record is a good reason to start learning Spanish. It comes with a really cool fanzine made by the genius Hector Melchor, singer and guitar player of SUDOR. The humor featured is so fucking cool that you can believe it's so simple. This is a great idea. Every time some band releases some mysterious record with sketchy sexual lyrics "because they can" we should demand to explain their sense of humor in a fanzine and see the kind of people they are. What do you think? ¡VIVA SUDOR!

SALVATION – "House of the Beating Hell" EP (Youth Attack)
I picture some catacombs and shit when I listen to this record. This is a real mix between hardcore, black metal and gothic rock in my opinion, but maybe I'm wrong with my assumption. Since this is the first time I have reviewed records in English, I'm gonna try to do it like the guys I read in the review section of this very magazine: "these guys make a really cool OTT dark hardcore. This reminds me of CHRISTIAN DEATH meets ABSURD. Total ripper!" Whatever, this record is fucking sick. This is the best thing they have done, and I was really into their previous EP.

ATENTADO – "Días de Rabia" LP (La Vida es un Mus)
This is what happens when a bunch of friends that love punk and know what they are doing get together and record something for the posterity. For me it was a fucking torture to wait for their next record since the first 7" came out three years ago. They disbanded the day this piece of art was released and that makes me wonder if they were planning their death when they wrote these songs. If so, what a great way to earn their fucking ticket to the punk Pantheon.

FRACASO – "Desafío Antiautoritario" 7" (self-released)
This record is a desperate scream from a place where being punk is fucking difficult. Often I have told American and European punks how difficult it is for us Latin American punks to get records or music gear. Amps are expensive, really expensive in the third world and yet, somehow, kids manage to get into cool music and play hardcore with a feeling you are never going to get from bands in first worlds countries. But as much as we tell the world how difficult it is,nobody is going to get it so bands like FRACASO put sound to the hell it is living in these ugly cities as mine. The lyrics in this record aren't about self-hatred or ugly sex interactions or degrading shit, these lyrics are about knowing that we are worthy of a decent living and happiness, and how the people singing and playing are so angry because a bunch of bastards don't want you to be a human being.

BIRTH DEFORMITIES – "Suburbanized" 10" (Cowabunga)
Since I am from a country where suburban areas mean slums, I can't really picture what they mean in a deep sense, but I can imagine what is to live in total boredom and shit. Marital abuse? What the fuck! When did such a mature subject become punk? Well, now I can imagine what the real meaning is of being suburbanized.

KREMLIN — "Will you Feed Me" EP (Hardware)
This record has a feeling that no other current Canada/USA record has, the feeling of trying to get other influences apart from American hardcore and being badass at the same time. Seems these guys are listening to punk worldwide and they don't give a fuck if the kids can't mosh to these tunes.

ORDEN MUNDIAL – LP (Discos Basura)
Sometimes people review records and say, "this is total Italian hardcore worship" just because some Japanese guys sing in Italian, or some monolingual guy misunderstood Spanish and thought it was Italian, but the music has nothing to do with this country's hardcore. Well, this record has a lot to do with STINKY RATS, UPSET NOISE and all of our Italian hardcore heroes, but I don't know if it is a direct influence. The thing is I can only think of Italian hardcore when I listen to these punks from Mallorca, Spain. Maybe I'm making the same mistake. Anyways, this record is perfect!

TERCER MUNDO – "Depreción" EP (Cintas Pepe)
I released this record with a friend so it feels weird to self promote it, but whatever. The first time I listened to the songs that were supposed to be on this record, I felt angry. You could feel the violence that was affecting Monterrey in every song. A city that was known for being the "wealthiest" city in Mexico was burning and their citizens seemed to be all right with that. Young people were the first target of violence. Either recruiting young kids as hitmen or destroying any trace of hope for the future, drug wars turned Monterrey into a nightmare place. TERCER MUNDO is asking a few real questions to the people living in this world. How can we be so inhuman? How can nothing affect us now, even if we are suffering every minute?

Those are my favorite records of the year. I also loved BIG EYES "Back From The Moon/I Don't Care about Friday Night", but apparently everybody's gonna put it in their top tens.
I also would like to mention that I fucking loved *Limited Readership* fanzine and *MoreNoize*.
The best tape of the year was CISMA – "Imagenes Podridas."
The best Taqueria in Mexico City is Los Primos near Taxqueña Subway.
¡Viva el punk!

FRED SCHRUNK

For me 2012 was a year of "giving up". Giving up on being angry. Giving up on being sad. Giving up on being upset about things I couldn't control. And with that, there were a pile of records that helped me see how awesome everything could be. Here's ten of those records...

HICKEY – "Various States of Dispair: Complete Works from 1994-1997" 2xLP (1-2-3-4 Go!)
Okay I don't like to list re-issues in my top 10 (little yet my *year-end* top 10) but this deserves mention nonetheless. I waxed poetic about this LP already in my column (much to the chagrin of Kevin Dill) but for those of you lucky enough to miss that over enthusiastic babble, I'll dive back into it for a second. Everyone (in punk) is a product of the first bands that truly made them see the world differently. This generally happens at a young age. When I heard HICKEY for the first time, I felt like I was hearing colors. Music that felt like it was played in tune with my own DNA. This is a double LP collection of all their singles and comp tracks. Truly the most essential.

FROZEN TEENS – LP (Do Ya Hear We? / Maul'd By Tigers)
Of any record that came out in the last year, this spent the most time on my turntable. Completely hypnotic melodies. Driving guitar riffs, hook after hook after hook after hook. From first note to the last, this destroys. The best new record of the year.

NEON PISS – LP (Deranged / Cut The Chord That...)
Even though my arch-nemesis Greg Harvester is in this band, I can't deny how completely awesome it is. So I'll put my immortal grudge aside and concede this album is high on the list of best albums of 2012. And as time passes they only seem to be getting better. Makes 'em hard to hate.

GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE – "Rattled Minds" LP (Dirt Cult / Razor Cake)
"Always leave them wanting more." That's the GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE motto. After (what seems like) a never-ending parade of EPs and split 7"s, G=G finally put out a 12". Could it be?! A G=G record that lasts over ten minutes? Nope. They blaze through all their tracks faster than you can say the alphabet. These guys drive me bonkers, but only because they're so good. And they only show you their brilliance in tiny bursts. Maybe someone will put out a compilation of their EPs and I'll be in pop-punk hog heaven.

RVIVR – "Joester Sessions 08-11" LP (Rumbletowne)
What would a Fred Schrunk year-end top ten be without an (overly generous) mention of RVIVR? How embarrassing it is to be predictable. But it's undeniable that this record rules! It's a collection of their previous EPs. All of which set the world on fire.

ZIPPERS TO NOWHERE – "Take it Easy" LP (Plan-it-X South)
Finally THIS BIKE IS A PIPEBOMB made the record I was always hoping they'd make. It's jangly, it's soulful, it's fun, but it feels sincerely *punk*. Not folk-punk. Just punk. Can't get enough.

TOYS THAT KILL – "Fambly 42" LP (Recess)
Okay, so I know all the TOYS THAT KILL records are kind of the same thing. But HOLY SHIT are these songs infectious! It's the same formula, but somehow they can sound fresh and original with every new album. Keep 'em coming fellas.

SLUT RIVER – "Off White" EP (self-released)
I reviewed this 7" in the record reviews for *MRR*, and gave it (what I thought) was a genuinely positive and endearing review. But word eventually got back to me that the band read the review and were bummed about my review. I think its because I made some comment about being surprised when a band called SLUT RIVER turned out to be awesome. Maybe they thought I was shitting on their name choice. Which wasn't the case at all. I think the band name is fine. It's just when you review records for *MRR* long enough, you notice some trends. Like for instance, most bands with the words "slut," "bitch," "whore," "shank" or "Fingers-Louie" in the name, are generally terrible. Not just terrible, but extremely terrible. But in this case, not only was the SLUT RIVER 7" awesome, but it was one of the most awesome records of the year.

CRACKBOX – "Couldn't Get Worse" 12" (self-released)
Some times you wanna dance. Sometimes you feel like a mutant and want to destroy everything. This LP lets you be both those people at the same time. After the apocalypse, when we're all living like Mad Max, this will be playing on everyone's armored motorcycle stereo.

AGATHA – LP (Rumbletowne)
It's hardcore that's brutal. That deals with intense emotions of hatred, agony and disgust. Yet, when the record's over, you have that feeling that "I'm not alone." Someone gets it.

Well, those're ten records, but there were several more records that ruled my life this year. Here's a list of just a few:
DOGJAW – "Slow To Build" LP
HARD FEELING – "Grey Days" EP
ALABASTER CHOAD – "Crash of the Limburger on Bebusland" LP
SON SKULL – "Wiped Clean" LP
APOGEE SOUND CLUB – "Belligerent" EP
MAX LEVINE ENSEMBLE – "Mr. Gikokovich" LP

LAYLA GIBBON

I was going to put a list of sevens and twelves and tapes but it didn't work out that way. I liked a lot of records this year, but these are the ones I actually played relentlessly at home... I wanted more mutant disgusted hardcore but the sounds that came out somehow didn't resonate in the right way. Things felt like a put on, like an outfit someone was wearing rather than a thing they couldn't help but do. Whine, whine whine. So, these are the records I listened to the most, not really in any order. I cheated and put two that I either don't own or only just got a hold of as well...

1. GOOD THROB – "Feminazi" EP (Super-fi)
Somewhere between HONEY BANE and NO TREND, GOOD THROB are absolutely incredible. This is my 7" of the year, no question. Girl sound for the dissolute and ready for action. Fuck!

2. COFFIN PRICKS – "Group Home Haircut" EP (Stationary (Heart))
Chris Thomson simply has one the best voices in punk, somewhere between Chris Bailey of the SAINTS and Mark E Smith of the FALL, filtered through some mutant hardcore... This 7" is so good, agitated guitars and furious rythmns colliding into a classic sound that would sound fresh and furious if it came out in 1977 or 1994 or 2066. Totally restored my faith, whilst simultaneously reminding me why I stockpiled FURY, CIRCUS LUPUS, SKULL KONTROL and MONORCHID records... Other people in this band also played in OTTAWA, CALVARY and fuckin' BOB TILTON. For the mutant minded.

3. WEIRD TV – 12" (Perennial)
Their tape was absolutely incendiary, a total liberation force of fuck you and fire, then the 7" was great but not *that*... This is. This is when you've talked too much and your brain hurts and your mouth is dried out and you wanna punch a hole through your window, this is dancing with true abandon with your best friends... A punk rock bottle rocket through your heart, like VULPESS playing the BRAT "Wolf and the Lamb" while all the cops perish and so on. OK? Seeing them play is the sound of liberation, total fury and soul, and this record somehow captures that feeling.

4. HONEYSUCK – "Grey Area" EP (Queen of Swords)
There are so many amazing lady-filled HC bands nowadays, which is definitely the sort of reality I am glad to be existing in. HONEYSUCK are from Massachusetts and charge forth with semi straight ahead no frills mid-paced HC with sick vocals. However a common trait of this new movement is an ability to combine the best of early '80s HC and '90s girlsounds, and HONEYSUCK create a sound that evokes both BABES IN TOYLAND and DIE KREUZEN, so in short they fucking rule.

5. C.R.A.S.H – "A War on All Fronts" EP (PPM)
More former-members-of madness... Featuring one of the

greatest hardcore drummers of all time, Brooks Headley (BORN AGAINST, UOA, WRANGLER BRUTES etctecetc), Michelle of MIKA MIKO and Cundo from WRANGLER BRUTES / FAST FORWARD / NAZTI SKINS as well as Dean from NO AGE, this coulda been amazing or just an overrated couldabeen disappointment. Fortunately this ruled my turntable so totally, a wash of eternal sound basement hardcore for the malnourished and discontented. Reminded me of MEN'S RECOVERY PROJECT, well the "hardcore" record they made when punx protested against the strange sounds they initially produced.

6. SPLITS – LP (P.Trash)
All girl band from Finland who named themselves in tribute to both the SLITS and the SPITS and who sound like the DICTATORS meet the TESTORS? So cool…

7. POTTY MOUTH – "Sun Damage" LP (Puzzle Pieces / Ride the Snake / Feeble Minds)
So good, more girl sound, yeah so the fuck what?! Like early BRATMOBILE playing the ADOLESCENTS, total melancholy perfect end of summer pop imbued with the raddest bursts of *Beach Blvd* punk… but that's not even right. They have a sound that is unique to their band, it's the longing and angst of classic K Records tapes, (and the melody) but then there will be this burst of punk vengeance and fun… They are such a cool and interesting band, and write great songs. I have heard them compared to TSUNAMI who I don't remember being any good, I guess they have some sort of '90s indie rock thing according to reviewer types… But I think what makes their band so exciting is the fact that they have all these touches of things that seem so familiar, but they have their own identity and sound and it's something you can't explain but it's so snotty and charming and something that I want more of. Can't wait for the next record!

8. CRAZY SPIRIT – 12" (Toxic State)
Malignant and true, sound of youth drinking paper bagged beverages in murky gentrifying areas of major metropolitan cities. Garbage Pail Kids vs the song "Explode" by VOID vs your brain after arguing about politics on some messageboard with snakey trolls who read Robert Jordan books whilst huffing hairspray.

9. XYX – "Teatro Negro" LP (Monofonus Press)
Who knew these geniuses released an LP!? Not me! I found it by accident when I was scouring the depths of the internet to make sure I didn't miss any jams on my list, so maybe it's a cheat entry as I said before, but it's *so good.* Recorded in 2010, and shelved until 2012, arty, dark drum and bass from Monterrey Mexico that is atmospheric and destructive, a difficult combo. If you liked their 7"s grab this ASAP.

10. PORCHARITAS – "Get Wasted With the…" (Vertical House)
Throwaway bratty party punk girls in the garage, with emphasis on "party" and "punk," a true *Killed By Death* capture! Bored youth making sick sounds for the sick! Can you resist this year's anthem about getting the clap!? No you can't!

11. DARK TIMES – "Girl Hate" EP (Fysisk Format)
Hardcore from Norway with shades of "My War" and NOG WATT, sick raw mid period BLACK FLAG feel! This band rules. I think I put their first 7" in my 2012 top ten, this one is a cheat because I don't actually own it since no one seems to have sent copies to US distros and it costs nearly $30 to order one from Europe!! And of course they didn't send one to *MRR*. But I have listened to their bandcamp over and over, and can confirm that if I could actually get a copy of the damn 7" it would be played repeatedly.

Not only but also / Everyone's a winner baby:
HOAX EPs, HOMOSTUPIDS EP, GG KING EP, SPRAYPAINT EP, THE STOPS EP, GOOSEBUMPS EP, UTAH JAZZ EP, PUFFY AREOLAS LP, ATENTADO LP, LOS OTRAS EP, TYVEK LP, NEON BLUD LP, PROTOMARTYR LP, HANK WOOD LP, CREEM LP.

TAPES
MYSTIC INSANE / IN SCHOOL / POTTY MOUTH / SPIRITUAL WARRIORS / INDEX / LIVID / TOTAL TRASH / POTTY MOUTH / PROXY / CHEMICAL PEEL / STILLSUIT / CRUDE THOUGHT / IN SCHOOL / RACCOON / CISMA / DISPLEASURE / TORTURA /VIXENS.

MAX MITCHELL

[From Sheffield, England, UK, Max Mitchell is the genius behind Back on the Bins, It's Just a Phase *and various other zines illustrating a humorous look at the Vegan sXe hardcore scene to which he belongs. —Mariam]*

1. VIOLENT REACTION – "Forced Out" EP (Static Shock / Quality Control HQ)
Scouse one-man straight edge musical genius bedroom project becomes a real band. Shouty straight edge skinhead rebellion and frustration.

2. NO TOLERANCE – "No Remorse, No Tolerance + Demo 12" (Quality Control HQ)
Boston straight edge. 30 years. Nothing has changed. RIVAL MOB/MIND ERASER dudes playing remorseless, relentless and unrepentant Boston straight edge hardcore. This brings together the demo and 7".

3. IRON CURTAIN – "Year of the Wolf" EP (Anger Battery)
If Bruce Springsteen was straight edge, from London, had a hardcore band and sang about smashing stuff up rather than just break ups. Wise beyond their years.

4. ABOLITION – "Language of Violence" EP (The Essence)
This band embodies everything you love about '90s metallic hardcore: the politics, the mosh parts, the jumbo–sized Xs. I think metal is shit, but I love this. '90s vibe, modern themes and strangely relevant.

5. SECTARIAN VIOLENCE – "Conflict of Interest" demo tape (Carry The Weight)
A Swede, an American and three Englishmen walk into a recording studio. Awkward international straight edge supergroup forms. Releases insanely good demo full of fast parts, internationalist politics and concern. Fails to take the world by storm. Plans to release album.

6. OBSTRUCT – demo tape (self-released)
Search online for "interesting facts about Huddersfield" and you'll find there aren't any. Five songs of early Boston straight edge hardcore from Huddersfield, the arsehole of West Yorkshire, England. Think LAST RIGHTS, DYS – minimalistic, brutal and effective.

7. IRON TO GOLD – "The Power of One" EP (Last Warning / Elephant Skin)
Second 7" from older straight edge dudes from Poland. Musically we're talking about a harder, faster *Bringin' It Down*–era JUDGE. Great recording and thoughtful, brooding lyrics.

8. MINDSET – "Leave No Doubt" LP (React)
Generic straight edge hardcore about caring, pain, wisdom, ignorance, thriving and surviving. Clenched fists, open minds, pounding hearts, carefully posed crew shots and...you know the rest. Great band, great typography and graphic design. A perfectly executed record.

9. NOOSE – "War of All Against All" EP (React)
This is their 2010 demo pressed onto vinyl. Vegan straight edge hardcore. Dischordant fast hardcore with distorted vocals and an intense outlook. Good to see a more punk take on animal rights/veganism rather than the sketchy metal/pro–life shit. Explosive band. Imploded on tour in Europe.

10. BASEMENT – "Colour Me in Kindness" LP (Run For Cover)
This is not the band you think it is. Melodic sing–alongs with phenomenal emotion and impact. The singer plays guitar in some straight edge bands too.

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MARISSA MAGIC

I got deep into playing guitar and it really shows in the things that I was way obsessed with this year. It's all about shredders and weirdoes.

ROSEANNE BARRR – "Repulsion" LP (Primitive Sounds / Tuff Enuff)
It seems that every year a record blows my mind just in time for top tens. Listening to this is like living in my diary pages. It sounds like a manifestation of my inner thoughts and it freaks me out and comforts me all simultaneously.

DISPLEASURE – demo tape (self-released)
For the entirety of this bands existence every time anyone asked what were the good bands in the Bay Area this was always the number one thing to fall out of my mouth. The hate soaks through deep on this last/latest tape and fucking shit everyone in this band is so tuff and it just shows.

CRUDE THOUGHT – demo tape (self-released)
This whole tape is rad, but the hit of the year is the last track. It gets uncomfortable and then demands all to fuck off. Also, yet another Olympia hardcore band with a total freak of a guitar shredder. Bored as fuck rolling eyes vocals and a total freak of a guitar shredder with the bass and the drums holding it all together. Rad rad rad.

TIPS FOR TWAT – "Tips for Twat" tape (self-released)
I honestly don't know if this came out this year, but this is the year it landed in my grubby paws and that my friends is all that matters. Somebody once told me that in Minneapolis if you weren't weird enough no one would care about you. This band is abrasive, but goofy at the same time. This band has a lot of moments where everything falls apart. This band is a bunch of freaks. This band is so awesome.

HYSTERICS – "EP Plus" tape (self-released)
I spun into a pool of regret when I realized last year that I major spaced and neglected to include this band in my top ten. This is one of the few bands I will still jump into the pit for in my old age. Everything about this band is so raging.

ALABASTER CHOAD – "Crash of the Limburger on Bebusland" LP (self-released)
These people are seriously some of the gayest freaks on the planet and it is so excellent. Two lead singers, delayed trumpet, stand-up bass and a normal drum set. Someone once described them as free jazz nu-metal to me and in so many ways that doesn't make sense at all but at the same time it kind of makes sense a little bit. Maybe more like total weirdo queer cacophony with such songs as "Dicks in the Air and "Suck a Cops Cock" and just so many buttholes.

WEIRD TV – 12" (Perennial)
I heard a rumor that Lizet played this record for her grandma who then asked if she was possessed by demons. This is the WEIRD TV record that I was waiting for.

SONSKULL – "Wiped Clean" LP (Perennial)
Wiped Clean is no *Birth Scene/Rewind*, but this is still a very fine record. As reported last year their set at the *Nuts!* release party in the pouring rain was blistering. Mary's voice is the perfect expression of panic and survival and Hayes shreds rad as always. Side a of this totally kills.

NU SENSAE – "Sundowning" LP (Suicide Squeeze)
I know these dudes and I know they are obsessed with some early nineties jams and it shows in really great ways on this one. I was talking to Brody about it and he was just like, "basically I'm kind of like Andreas metal zone pedal" and although this record doesn't fully and completely blow my mind like *TV, Death and the Devil* did it's still a solid record. And just because *TVDD* was a rad record doesn't mean they should just write that record over and over again, cause you know that would be such a bummer. New territories, new times. At points it sounds like the guitar is an afterthought, but there are a bunch of tracks here where they fully gain their footing and it just makes me so excited for the next record.

INDEX – demo tape (self-released)
Mere minutes of spaz, but still this manages to keep my attention for hours on end. I caught them at a taqueria and was totally mesmerized by Jess's hair. Lyrics spat out and way frantic everything else, it's a totally perfect pogo.

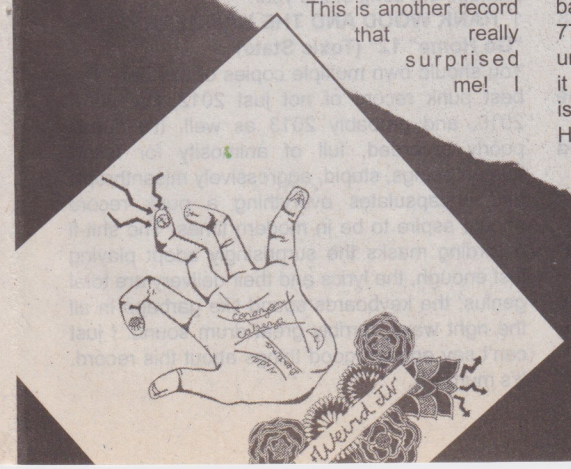
MARKKU HIRVELA TOINEN VAITOEHTO

Markku Hirvelä of *Toinen Vaihtoehto*, Finland.

LP's

FORWARD – "War, Nuke and Death Sentence" LP (Prank)
I was so happy to hear this. In fact I was a bit worried if this was going be good or not. But it my opinion this is easily the best FORWARD record in over ten years, since *Just go Forward to Death*. Songs like "Enough" really stuck in your head the first time you heard them and the next time you were able to sing along. Catchy and powerful, FORWARD is back with a super strong record.

FIGHT BACK / HAZARD – "Realities of Hardcore Punk" split 12" (Kick Rock)
This is another record that really surprised me! I had never heard of FIGHT BACK and they blew me away. I wrote somewhere else: "I've pretty much had enough of noisecore, can we move on, please. I want more Japcore from Japan and I want it to be this good!!" I'm still standing behind that statement. The vocalist of FIGHT BACK is Tokurow from BASTARD, so you'll recognize and love the voice and the drummer used to be in GISM and is tons of other bands still. Oh yeah, there's the other side to this record too. It's HAZARD, I've got nothing to complain about, but FIGHT BACK really steals the cake here! No way around it.



PÄÄ KII – LP (Airiston Punk-levyt)
This band could be called ex-KAKKAHÄTÄ 77, since Teemu wrote the music and lyrics for both bands. PÄÄ KII continues where KAKKAHÄTÄ 77 stopped and actually uses some of their unreleased songs. Really melodic punk rock, but it still has a rough edge to it. Big part of the band is definitely the lyrics, but they sing in Finnish. Harsh and depressing stories about people doing not so good in their lives… mental health problems, drugs and alcohol, poverty and all that. All very well written, good observations from the darker side of the road. Even in the mainstream (music) press in Finland PÄÄ KII has started to be really hyped lately, it's crazy—but this record is just that good!

ISTERISMO – "Folia Verso l'Interno" 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
This band takes the whole noisy, oh so noisy, core to the next level. The record is short enough to keep you focused and it's crazy enough to listen to it over and over again to try to figure out what the hell is happening. You don't really need any other new noisecore records but this.

PERTTI KURIKAN NIMIPÄIVÄT – "Kuus kuppia kahvia… ja yks kokis" LP (Airiston Punk-levyt)
PKN has to be one of the most sincere and honest bands ever. It's four retarded guys and I do mean it literally. Some of them have Down Syndrome or are otherwise mentally handicapped. But that doesn't stop them making great punk songs and singing about their daily lives. Sure, their music might sound a bit monotone sometimes, but at least you'll recognize them when you hear them. PKN is one of the most entertaining live bands out there for sure.

MAAILMANLOPPU – "Ja historia kiertää kehää…" LP (Kämäset Levyt / Paha Tukka Elämä)
The best Finnish band right now! The best Finnish record of 2012! They have great songs and over the top vocalist. It's like Finnish hardcore punk from 1983 or 1984. It's not the fastest ever, but

it doesn't have to be. It's got real songs, great songs and tons of energy. They just do what they think is great music. And that's exactly what this, great music. Mandatory, absolutely mandatory.

TRAUMA – 12" (Feral Ward)

Short songs packed with energy, chaotic guitars that'll pierce your ears, strong vocals and basically just stripped down hardcore punk the way it was meant to be. Catchy, raw, fast and powerful. If you don't like this, you probably don't like hardcore punk music at all. Last track "Out of Asylum" has a strong Tampere City feeling in it. I bet these guys know all the old Finnish bands you've never heard of, yet.

NAILBITER – "The Bait" 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus)

These Brazilian squatters invaded London, made records and then all of a sudden disappeared. But now they are back and are better than ever. These guys always thought that *Scandinavian Jawbreaker* is a great ANTI CIMEX release and so do I! You can hear the influence of later CIMEX in this record; just pay attention to those riffs! Throw in some Japanese hardcore influences and you've got NAILBITER.

SUPER FRISKY – "For... Buddy LP" (Burai Core)

I didn't "get" this record at first. I mean it was good and interesting, but I wasn't blown away by it. Still, I somehow found myself listening to it over and over again. I really grew on me. This is yet another band that has members from all your favorite Japanese bands (like TETSU AREI and JUDGEMENT). SUPER FRISKY sounds like the band that really loves playing the music and has fun doing it, and it gives them that extra kick to rise above others. Great complex and simple (if that makes sense) hardcore with female vocalist.

ANTIMOB – LP (Εξωτικός Παροξυσμός)

What the hell? This is my new favorite band. The record really hit me like a hammer as soon as I heard it. I didn't think the older stuff was that great, so this was a really nice surprise. This Greek hardcore band has perfect songs, overwhelming amount of energy and I can't get enough of it. They really have their own thing going on. Somehow lots of Greek bands seem to be able to do that, great! No copying this or that, just pure hardcore madness very well executed.

7"s

YDINTUHO / KYLMÄ SOTA – split EP (Psychedelica)

Since DISCLOSE is gone, someone needs to fill the gap. That band is KYLMÄ SOTA and that's a FACT. Great songs and "enough" distortion. If you want to hear D-beat played with full effect, the way it was meant to be played, Hessu from KYLMÄ SOTA delivers. YDINTUHO is great too, traditional hardcore with bits of crust thrown into it.

SOTATILA / THINK AGAIN – split EP (Hardcore Survives)

Great split, both sides are super good. SOTATILA is doing the old time Finnish hc thing and THINK AGAIN takes the Japcore approach. Both sound equally great though very different from each other.

CONFRONT "Curtain of an Intense Attack" EP (Not Very Nice / General Speech)

This is not noisecore from Japan. This is more traditional Japanese hardcore and it's really well done. I was impressed as soon as I heard it. I've been missing this stuff!! It seems like there was no more bands in Japan doing this style, luckily there are now! Though CONFRONT has been doing their thing years and years, it just took a long time to perfect their sound and release a record of their own. It was worth waiting for.

YDINPERHE – "Meistä ei tullut mitään" EP (self-released)

Another Finnish band that you may have not heard yet and one of my favorite live bands in Finland. Super energetic and fun to watch. What more do you need from a hardcore punk band? You need great lyrics and YDINPERHE has that covered too!

VENDETTA – "Fight" EP (Hardcore Survives)

What a great punk band from Japan. This is their 2nd EP. They have this kind of UK82 approach to their version of punk and it sounds excellent. Think of the LAST SURVIVORS, this is in the same alley. Japanese bands have this somewhat secret knowledge of how to copy all your favorite bands and make it sound like you invented the whole thing.

SKIZOPHRENIA – "Don't give up!" EP (Hardcore Survives)

Seeing them live really opened the world of SKIZOPHRENIA to me. One of the best Hardcore Survives releases. This band just keeps delivering the good stuff.

PERIKATO – "Jälkiteollinen painajainen" EP (Raakanaama)

Noisy and abrasive hardcore from Finland. PERIKATO sounds very chaotic and disturbed and that in my books equals great!

DHK – "Primera Maketa" EP (Odio los Discos)

Peruvian Hardcore band, that sounds like they updated Ataque Frontal with D- beat. This could be a lost record from the '80s, but it's better than any lost gem could ever be. This shit is happening right now and I love it!!

SUDOR – "Cruce de Cables" EP (Beat Generation / Solo Para Punks).

This is definitely not the best SUDOR release, far from it, but it's still better than most records out there or I just might be in love with SUDOR.

FORWARD – "Devil's Cradle/What's the Meaning of Love?" (540)

I started with FORWARD and I'll end with them. "What's the meaning of Love?" is one of my all time favorite punk songs and there's a re-recorded version of this classic on the B-side. Can't go wrong with that one. The good thing is, that the A-side "Devil's Cradle' is great track too. It's good to see that these guys still have songs like this in them.

CHUCK BARRELS

TOP TEN RECORDS FROM 2012
YOU NEED TO OWN

If, for some reason, you were only allowed to have ten records from 2012 in your collection, these are the ten I would pick as of today, in order. Reissues were not counted, since you should own OG copies of any cool record from the past already. Or else you're just not trying hard enough. Things I'm looking forward to in 2013: KREMLIN 12", posthumous BROWN SUGAR records, WETBRAIN 12" and the 48 game NHL season.

10. **ROPES – "Demo II" EP (Youth Attack)**

They should release this on a different format every year. Keeps getting better.

9. **BITS OF SHIT – "Cut Sleeves" LP (Homeless)**

The next link in the genetic chain begun with feedtime and COSMIC PSYCHOS. Sounds like ROSE TATTOO if they listened to a lot of WIRE.

8. **TYVEK – "On Triple Beams" LP (In the Red)**

Modern American DIY is done no better than these Detroit rockers. Music with a purpose and a message.

7. **WHITE LOAD – "Pig Eyes/Little Black Pig" (Ken Rock)**

The darlings of the RI scene unleash riffs that are illegal in most states on this platter. The BLACK TRAITOR cover will peel your wig back.

6. **FNU RONNIES – "Saddle Up" LP (Load)**

Weird rock-skronk that gives new definition to the term "buzzsaw-punk". Will fry synapses.

5. **URANIUM ORCHARD – "1st LP" LP (Cold Vomit)**

The remnants of DRY ROT hang out and get weird(er).

4. **KREMLIN – "Will You Feed Me?" EP (Hardware)**

Best Canadian hardcore record since way back when FUCKED UP used to actually play hardcore.

3. **FOLDED SHIRT – "Tiny Boat/Mouth Clock" (Fashionable Idiots)**

The kings of Cleveland's last gasp gives us two of their greatest tunes. Mouth mouth mouth. Clock.

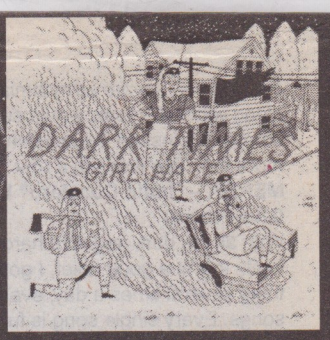
2. **GG KING – "Joyless Masturbation/Bag" (Total Punk)**

Double-sided hookfest up in your grill. "Bag" was perhaps the song of the year.

1. **HANK WOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS – "Go Home" 12" (Toxic State)**

You should own multiple copies of this one. The best punk record of not just 2012, but 2011, 2010, and probably 2013 as well. It's dumb, poorly recorded, full of animosity for fellow human beings, stupid, aggressively misanthropic and encapsulates everything a punk record should aspire to be in modern times. The shit-fi recording masks the surprisingly adept playing just enough, the lyrics and their delivery are total genius, the keyboards sound like garbage in all the right ways, terribly great drum sound. I just can't say enough good things about this record. It's murder!

BRYONY BEYNON



Top ten from my bedroom floor. Strange as it may seem to include so many demos, I'll pick glints of perfection in the accidental, that sweet possibility explosion that only a four-track tape can bring over slick fully realized concepts always. No reissues in here for the same reasons. Two records I listened to a lot in 2012 that apparently came out at the tail end of 2011 were the Hysterics EP and Royal Headache LP, so I am leaving those out with regret.

WEIRD TV – 12" (Perennial)
I shared the sentiments of some folks about the recording of the WEIRD TV 7", and initially felt the same about this 12", as there's a hollowed out-ness to the recording, but on repeated listens it's actually perfect, commanding, angry but somehow far off. The guitar sounds like drugs. Good ones I don't know the names of. Feminist punker realities from deserted moons, ultimate badassery, speak Spanish or cry, the flow of this record seems to bend and shift with its own currency. Perfect.

NO – 12" (Static Shock)
In one deft hail of feedback and stomping, this 12" proved that the UK is more than capable of producing hardcore that isn't trying to sound American, and indeed doesn't have to rely on taking cues from trends that have already been pushed to their limits 'over there.' That said, reference points like MECHT MENSH came up and not without reason, but there's also a tension and a dissonance to how Ralph's pretty distinctive guitar sound seethes in a pleasingly awkward way around the hardcore formula. The lack of lyrics with this LP was a gripe for some, but I've spun this enough to have made my own words up to Jim's otherworldly groans (ooer.) So excited for what they'll do next.

NU SENSAE – "Sundowning" LP (Suicide Squeeze)
It says a lot about a band when the addition of a guitar is a controversial decision. Andrea and Daniel has become Andrea, Daniel and Brody. Still present is the total dedication to prolific activity and never standing still, Andrea's voice is still the gravel on your knees texture, and the guitar feels like it belongs absolutely. Like it had to happen. Blown out hymns. There's a song on here that reminds me of TOZIBABE so hard, which can only be a really great thing. Brilliant.

IN SCHOOL – demo tape (self-released)
Stand Up Or Die!
I got this tape in a trade and didn't stop listening to it for a long time. Killer all-lady NYHC, focused and utterly furious, you might file with YDI for slammable vibes, The Fix for a comparable guitar tone. One of a handful of tapes that spelt new and nascent possibilities that have meant a lot to me in 2012.

GRASS WIDOW – "Internal Logic" LP (HLR)
A band that drifted in and out of my peripheral vision for a long time, they're big three records in and this still makes me think of the RAINCOATS with a sunburn. Hope music from super séance sessions, and the haziness is intriguing instead of irritating, like a dream you vaguely remember instead of a tip of tongue answer. This feels like the answer, indeed. "Disappearing Industries" is one of the songs of 2012. This is a real jam band, take note Greg Ginn.

DARK TIMES – "Girl Hate" EP (Fysisk Format)
DARK TIMES make furious girl (and dude) driven hardcore punk in Oslo, Norway, which is tasteful and forceful at the same time, with a dirty grunginess to the sound that offsets the vocals perfectly. Most talk of this band has referenced their "scene" and strong links with other "black hole crew" bands, I couldn't tell you who that refers to other than maybe Okkultokrati? Either way this record is catchy and brilliant and puts this band at a totally autonomous level. Need more!

SHOPPERS / PANZRAM – split EP (IFB / Feeble Minds)
Oh SHOPPERS. I really like PANZRAM too but this record stands for me as the last vestiges of a band that imp/ex/ploded before their time... This record looks beautiful and is an exception to the many badly-thought-out split records there are in the world that really shouldn't exist. So glad this one does, a band that yanked the curtains open on a period of punk marked for mopey, contrived mystery, and made everyone get real. In PANZRAM there is a solid, solid band that have done the same trick for some years and continue to do so. Oi oi oi.

UNA BESTIA INCONTROLABLE – demo tape (self-released)
Unrelenting, stompy, post-reverbo Barca next levelism. Pure hardcore. The experience of seeing this band live twice in two days (their first two gigs were in London despite being Spanish) is no doubt a big part of why they've ended up on this list.
In the unnecessary metaphor department, I think it's pertinent to mention that I'm stuck between "having your fingers crushed by the gears of a thundering, glistening death machine" and "getting brutally gnawed at by a primordial wolf-mother hungry to recycle your kneecaps as toys for her young." La eponymous Bestia could, and may well be, a little of both.

POTTY MOUTH – "Sun Damage" 12" (Feeble Minds / Puzzle Pieces / Ride the Snake)
Obviously I expected this to sound like BRATMOBILE and it totally didn't. There's a melancholic downbeat rain-on-windows sense here, it's evocative and cool sad punk that's in no way emo, I should say. This roars far too much for all the *C86* comparisons I've seen thrown about, for me, but I'd settle for studded leathers over a nice cardigan. Abby's voice inducing a "Wait… 33 or 45?" moment with its bassiness—this is all just ragged enough around the right edges.

WOOLF – "The Right Way to Play" (La Vida es un Mus)
It's really important to my sanity that this band exists. A band that throws out most conventions to create something jarring, noisy, spacious and *new*; where what isn't said is just as relevant as what is; that also manages to be insanely catchy, despite being largely yelpy screams up front. A lot of it is in the bass, the guitar is has a buzzing texture, a metalzone trading off with a stand-up bass-drum-less drummer and every other unexpected juxtaposition you might get when four fully formed humans make a noise without compromising. Live it possibly gels better than this record really captures, as it's quite a clean recording, but when it does, the results are perfect, and they've still managed to capture a lot of that spirit on this 12". Dulwich witches scratching uncontrollable itches. Again, excited for new material and what they do next.

KUBEL CINTAS PEPE

SUDOR – "Cruces de Cables" EP (Solo Para Punks / Beat Generation)
My favorite band from Spain next to GLAM nowadays, simple and crude, this 7" is just amazing, this is the kind of record that makes you want to go form a band and fuck everything else. It comes with #13 of *Amigo Blas* fanzine that will make you pee your pants laughing.

SALVATION – "House of the Beating Hell" EP(Youth Attack)
I must confess, at first I didn't like it much, and it's certainly different from SALVATION's previous records, but I guess I was just expecting senseless fast-as-fuck songs. The truth is that it's got a very goth vibe on it and as a lover of gothic rock I feel ashamed of not seeing this before—it's just dark as fuck, it reminds me a lot of MIGHTY SPHINCTER gone hardcore, with some subhuman hellish vocals desperately howling in the void. This is a masterpiece.

BIRTH DEFORMITIES – "Suburbanized" 10" (Cowabunga)
I think I got initially captivated by the guitar with flanger/chorus, that sound is just glorious. I love the mid-pace beat, it just makes me smile and makes me believe there's a better tomorrow. I never thought you could mix in such a good way dark riffs with good old American hardcore upbeat riffs, it just sounds like a demented version of CÜLO and I couldn't expect less sharing members of such band.

ATENTADO – "Días de Rabia" LP (La Vida es un Mus)
Female fronted D-beat super-group from Barcelona, every single instrument is brutal. The drums are quite tight, I don't think there's a better way to play D-beat; I don't even think there should be one. The bass is always

causing you severe arrhythmias and the guitar along with the vocals would surely drive you completely insane if you listen to this record more than five times in a row.

MERDA – "Indio Cocalero" LP (SPHC / Läjä / Give Praise)
With all the dark negative hardcore I listen to lately this is a good relief. I gotta hear the whole thing several times a day, even the samba songs. Every single song is fun in a way, even more when they add certain sounds or drop a keyboard here and there. This is the kind of record you'll hardly forget and if you ever do, when you remember it you'll do it with a smile on your face.

BRAIN TUMORS – "Fuck you Forever" EP (Deranged)
Even though not as noisy as the LP, it's still fierce, loud, raw as fuck and super-fast with breakdowns that simply highlight the hopelessness expressed in the vocals. When I hear this I get a strange feeling in the chest, I wanna scream, punch and jump all over the place.

KREMLIN – "Will you Feed Me" EP (Hardware)
This 7" reminds me of a lot of stuff, from early AVSKUM to DESTINO FINAL, but it clearly sounds American… although they're from Canada. The center-pieces here are the rawness and the delayed vocals, I think it's the most straightforward and honest record I've come by this year.

SCHOOL JERKS – LP (Grave Mistake / Bad vibrations)
It's not too noisy, there's actually a moderated amount of feedback on it, but it's pretty tight, simple and straightforward, with a sound somewhere between the Midwest and DC, but it escapes the "generic" label by far. Listening to it once is just not enough.

HOUNDS OF HATE – tape 2012 (self-released)
This band was totally unexpected, they're not necessarily about speed, they're more into doing amazing riffs and arrangements. There're some pretty epic breakdowns and that drum kit, especially the snare drum, is mind blowing. The vocals might not be angry as fuck but they're fucking serious. I think these tracks are from an upcoming LP, which I can't wait to hear.

LAS OTRAS – "Las Otras" EP (Discos Sense Nom)
Spanish girls doing hardcore is simply amazing, I enjoy the vocals so much. This is like TOZIBABE but a lot angrier. I just wish there were more bands like this in the world.

ORDEN MUNDIAL – LP (Discos Basura)
Debut LP from this band from Mallorca, I can't think of anything else but ANTIDOGMATIKSS and IV REICH, raw hardcore punk, no-time-to-lose and straight to the face.

KOSZMAR – "Polska Dupa" demo tape (self-released)
Maybe it's just me but this shit went totally underrated, it's like 2012's BLACK AGE, equally fast and dark but 100% Polish, even If they're from Vancouver. The vocals are great, shouted from a pit of despair. I really hope to hear more from this band soon.

GREG HARVESTER

LPS

FROZEN TEENS – LP (Do Ya Hear We? / Maul'd By Tigers)
There are a lot of records on this list and I like them all pretty equally… except for this one. I listened to this LP more than anything else this year. Everything about it is perfect, from the opening bravado of "Been a While" to the staggering, lilting closing of "Bury Me Alive." It's excellent melodic punk at its absolute finest. I've been waiting years for this record and I was not let down in the slightest. Perfect.

MIND SPIDERS – "Meltdown" LP (Dirtnap)
I knew this would be good since the band includes half of the MARKED MEN, but I didn't know it would be *this good*. Completely flawless synth-pop with melodies that won't leave your head for days or weeks on end. It should come with a warning label stating that. It takes a special kind of band to make music that seems so simple still sound so fresh—addictive and vital.

NO STATIK – "Everywhere You Aren't Looking" LP (Prank)
This Bay Area band's first 12" last year was pretty unstoppable, but they somehow put this thing out and managed to hone their sound into something meaner, more destructive and completely unfuckwithable. When I first got this home, I cleaned my room to Side A, which is a side-long ambient soundscape thing (which, for the record, I'm completely into). When I dropped the needle on Side B, I just sat and stared at the record spinning around, mouth agape. This destroys.

SICKOIDS – LP (Residue)
Sick band. Sick record. Sick live show in Oakland. Sickoids. Everything about this record is sick.

DOGJAW "Slow to Build" LP (Rumbletowne)
DOGJAW's slow, brooding, howling record sounds like a rainy Pacific Northwest afternoon. They're the kind of band that is sure to have a stocked tincture shelf and a hot mug of tea at the end of the night. These are my people.

BAADER BRAINS – "New Era Hope Colony" LP (Empyre / Clean Plate / Ebullition)
A triumphant, exuberant, beautiful work of art that leaves me speechless.

ALABASTER CHOAD – "Crash of the Limburger on Bebusland" LP (self-released)
First off, my pal E.R. Conner bought this LP off of their stand-up bass player, Orson, when he was randomly selling it on the street downtown in order to buy cat food. Secondly, this band is completely indescribable, but I think they are amazing. True freak music for fucked up queers and weirdos.

EXUSAMWA – "Excusez-Moi" LP (100% Breakfast)
There is absolutely no other band like FAT DAY and I have been mourning their loss for a long time now. This band is not FAT DAY, but one of the members is in this band and there are screeches, skronks, tempos and bonkers-style songwriting that makes me feel the same as the aforementioned band. This music is uncomfortable and strange. I love it. It also includes a board game, which is insane.

LEATHERFACE – "Mush" LP (bootleg)
An important band. An important record. I'm glad someone finally released it on vinyl, even if it is a "bootleg."

HICKEY – "Various States of Dispair: Complete Works from 1994-1997" 2xLP (1-2-3-4 Go!)
Yes, this is a reissue, but this band helped to shape my views on DIY punk in ways that will stay with me for the rest of my life. Every song on here is a classic. If you don't like HICKEY, I probably don't like you.

EPs

REPLICA – flexi (Radical Punk Never Die)
Perfect Bay Area hardcore that is fierce as fuck. Seriously, every time I see REPLICA, I can't believe I'm lucky enough to live in a town with a band that is this great. I get the same feeling when I listen to this flexi version of their demo.

CLEANSING WAVE – "Tread On" EP (PRGNT)
This noisy crust band from Massachusetts isn't afraid of melody and gets better every time I see or hear them. This record rules.

FUTURO – "Sair De Mim" (Nada Nada/Spicoli
My friend Juliana saw me at a record swap and pointed out this record in her distro. She said "I bet you'll like this." I bought it without knowing anything about it and I love it. Raging, ragged melodic punk that is fierce.

NO STATIK – "No Hospice/Clean Swift Sunshine" EP (Prank)
"No Hospice" is my favorite hardcore song of 2012. It's dark, brooding, confrontational and venomous. It sounds like the earth being annihilated. The flip side, "Clean Swift Sunshine" is not a snoozer either.

NO STATIK – "Never Be a Martyr/ Earhammer Soundsystem" EP (Prank)
Did I mention yet that I like NO STATIK a lot? Did I also mention that they played the single best live set of any band that I saw this year? Well, they did. Prank Fest 2012. This EP rips. (Prank)

THE WAR GOES ON – "This Shitty Life" EP (New Dark Age)
Tough, snarling street punk from members of NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS. It doesn't quite pick up where NOFTK left off, but I don't need that in my life, you know what I mean? New anthems for the new times. I want more of this…. way more.

PERMACULTURE – "Swallow What You're Given" EP (Inflammable Material)
Perfect-sounding, precise peace punk that stayed with me since the day I first heard it.
DEAD MOON – "Too Many People" EP (Mississippi)
DEAD MOON is my favorite band of all time. I don't trust people who dislike them. They could trot out practice tapes pressed onto vinyl from now until the end of time and I swear they'll be on every top ten list I ever write because they live, breathe and play rock and roll better than you or any of your friends will ever make in any of our lifetimes. Period. End of story.
MÜLLTÜTE – "Zweite" EP (HeartFirst)
Highly destructive two-person punk from Germany that is rough around the edges, but so great! No songs over two minutes! Plus, they named their band so that Americans would sound stupid saying it.
FOREIGN OBJECTS – "Mammonism/Fable" (Cut The Cord That...)
FOREIGN OBJECTS were consistent and fierce in their short time as a band. They did not release one bad song. As usual, everything is over too quickly, but it's so good that I don't even care.

TAPES!
LUMPY AND THE DUMPERS – tape
These freaks put out a three-song demo that has been destroying my ear drums since I put it in my tape player months ago. Manic, falling apart, ugly punk.
DISPLEASURE – tape
DISPLEASURE spread bad vibes a mile wide, made me feel all of my feelings and then they broke up. It was the perfect length of time for a great punk band to be together, but I'm still mourning the loss.
TREPANNING – "Live At WFMU" tape
Bouncy, synthy, loose indie-punk that makes me long for a New York that no longer exists.
ADULTS – "Vol III" tape
These Oaklanders put out three caustic tapes of fast melodic punk blasts in less than a year. Not one of them is any less than brilliant. This one might be my favorite. Free Matteo!!
LIGHT BRIGADE – tape
Arty, angular, precise-yet-loose punk that sends shivers up my spine.
FULL SUN – "Bare Floor" tape
My friend Jeff's one-man band where he expertly writes the catchiest, most hook-drenched pop you can imagine.
PIG HEART TRANSPLANT – "Head Scan Pt 2" tape
Some of the most uncomfortable sounds I've ever heard. I was listening to this on headphones in a darkened boxcar in the middle of nowhere and I had to stop because it creeped me out really fucking bad.
THE NEW FLESH – tape
Total new dark-age music to make you dance around your room and feel like shit in the best way.
INDEX – tape
Four songs. No bullshit. One of the best new bands in the Bay Area.
SAD BOYS – tape
You can get pissed off about this if you want, but 2012 pogo-punk just sounds like mid-'90s pop punk and I am totally okay with that. Total headache music! Shit your parents will hate.

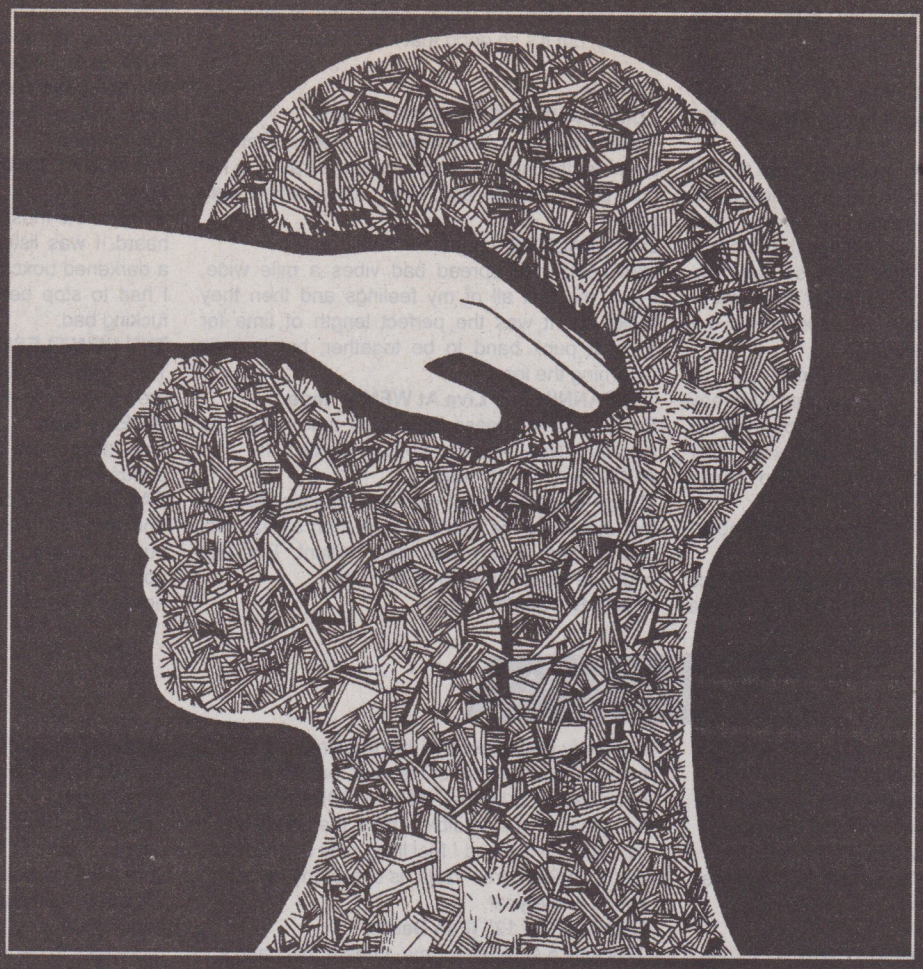
ADAM KATORGA

LPs/12"s/10"s
I wasn't actually particularly impressed with the longer format releases of 2012 within the punk and hardcore world. I just managed to come up with ten LP/12"/10" releases I feel are worthy of a "best of" list, so here we go.

HANK WOOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS – "Go Home!" 12" (Toxic State)
Definitely my most listened-to record of 2012 behind the GRIMES LP. Seriously, I was obsessed with this record for months. At its worst, during a five weeks tour I roadied on, half of the conversations in the van consisted of HANK WOOD song titles and lyrics. The band garners unfair comparisons to surf and garage, as well as fair comparisons to butcher shops, but it's definitely also not conventional hardcore. I'd say an accurate genre would be "moron boogie stomp." Best punk record of 2013.
CRAZY SPIRIT – 12" (Toxic State)
Definitely was expecting this to be my favorite NYC release of the year, but it's a bit overshadowed by the HANK WOOD LP. That being said, it's incredible. I think the band can truly stretch out and I feel like I now understand the band far more. "Train" is one of my favorite songs of the year.
TACO LEG – 12" (Fan Death)
This was a surprise for me. I heard this band's 7"s and found them to be underwhelming, especially when they were (pretty accurately?) described as BEAT HAPPENING meets BLACK FLAG. Imagine a lazy-ass EDDY CURRENT that sings about absolutely nothing. On this LP, however, the songwriting is much improved and everything is catchier. Kudos to these Aussies!
ISTERISMO – "Follia Verso L'interno" 12" (Crust War / La Vida Es Un Mus)
I've only heard this album four times until now (waiting for my copy, forced to leech off of friends), but it's blowing my mind so far and ISTERISMO is one of my favorite contemporary Japanese bands—this is their best material.
SLICES – "Still Cruising" LP (Iron Lung)
I wasn't as blown away by this LP as their first one, *Cruising*, but it's SLICES, so I still love it. It's less immediate than the first, but it's definitely worth the extra time involved to get into it. R.I.P.
NASA SPACE UNIVERSE – "NSU" 12" EP (self-released)
Apparently, this is a divisive release amongst some NASA fans, but I think this is their best material to date, even superior to their excellent LP. The first song has the coolest riff! I keep hearing conflicting reports of their status as a band, but I hope they keep going because they're headed in a great direction.
BIRTH DEFORMITIES – "Suburbanized" 10" (Cowabunga)
I was once told by someone close to this band that it was the first essential 10" since the GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS 10" and I'm inclined to agree 100%. So much so, that I always wish it was just a 12". Dammit. CÜLO dudes team up with the legendary Nick Sick to make a Midwest USHC classic. Don't be afraid of the "1" and the "0."
SCHOOL JERKS – LP (Grave Mistake / Bad Vibrations)
The true gods of savage hardcore unleash their debut LP and it's the best release yet. I wasn't sure if they had what it took to write a proper LP, since I viewed them as a quick-hitting 7" band, but this LP shows that I need to have more faith in people's abilities.
NO TOLERANCE – "No Remorse, No Tolerance + demo" 12" (Quality Control HQ)
This is a weird comp record, but I need to have at least one straightedge record on my top ten and NO TOLERANCE is the best contemporary edge band in the world, not that that says anything, really. This collects their demo, their perfect 7" and a bonus track that's pretty cool. What's not to like? Other than the politics, if you're a coward. Straightedge in your face, world.
CAIRO PYTHIAN – "Towytowne" LP (Perennial)
Olympia, Washington's, Perennial is one of the best labels going right now and this was my favorite release of theirs for this year. Great synth stuff that's a little off the punk radar, but it's Perennial, so it's OK!

7"s/Tapes
Now we come to the smaller format portion of my top ten, which, to me, contains the most impressive punk/hardcore releases of 2012. Too many fine releases had to be cut from my list to keep it at ten selections.

BLOODKROW BUTCHER – "Anti War" EP (Side Two)
This record caught me by surprise. I mean, I always thought they were a cool band. Their first 7" is really solid and PJ is the best drummer in the universe, but then I heard he switched to vocals and some bus-misser named Con took over drum duties and I got sad. Of course, there is more than one good drummer in said universe and this record is actually exponentially better than their first. The title track might be the punk song of the year.



IRON LUNG

WHITE GLOVE TEST

PRANK

LP / CD out MARCH 1ST

2XLP / 2XCD limited version First Pressing

IRON LUNG "WHITE GLOVE TEST" NORTH AMERICAN TOUR:

MARCH : 1 Vancouver, BC @ TBA W/ Column Of Heaven // **2 Seattle, WA** @ Black Lodge W/ Column Of Heaven, Mutant Video // **3 Portland, OR** @ Black Water Records W/ Column Of Heaven , Gag // **4 Olympia, WA** @ Joey House W/ Column Of Heaven/ **5 Sacramento, CA** @ The Colony W/ Column Of Heaven, Rat Damage, Alarms & Rad // **6 San Jose, CA** @ Finca Mission W/ Column Of Heaven, Replica, Permanent Ruin & Caged Animal// **7 San Francisco, CA** @ Knockout W/ Column Of Heaven, Neon Piss & No Love // **8 Oakland, CA** @ First Church Of The Buzzard W/ Column Of Heaven // **9 Santa Ana, CA** @ Unit B W/ Column Of Heaven, Boston Strangler, Rival Mob// **10 Los Angeles, CA** @ Lethal Amounts W/ Column Of Heaven, Boston Strangler, Rival Mob, Knife Fight // **11 San Diego, CA** @ TBA // **12 Phoenix, AZ** @ Wall Street // **13 Albuquerque, NM** @ Synchro Studios W/ Fort Hobo, Ronoso // **14 Tulsa, OK** @ The Sound Pony W/ Common Fears // **15 Dallas, TX** // **16 Austin, TX** // **17 Houston, TX** // **18 New Orleans, LA** // **19 Hattiesburg, MS** // **20 Nashville, TN** @ The Owl Farm // **21 Chattanooga, TN** @ Sluggos W/ Unspoken Triumph // **22 Atlanta, GA** @ TBA W/ Shaved Christ // **23 Gainesville, FL** @ The Atlantic w/ Shaved Christ // **24 Athens, GA** @ The Farm // **26 Richmond, VA** @ Gallery 5 W/ Dreamdecay // **27 Newark, DE** @ Black Lung W/ Dreamdecay // **28 Philadelphia, PA** @ First Unitarian Church w/ Dreamdecay // **29 Glen Cove, NY** @ Glen Cove Moose Lodge w/ Dreamdecay, Water Torture, Pizza Hi Five, Damaged Goods // **30 Brooklyn, NY** @ Death By Audio w/ Dreamdecay // **31 Boston, MA** W/ Dreamdecay

APRIL: 2 New Hampshire // **3 Maine** // **4 Montreal, QC** @ Death Church // **5 Ottawa, QC** @ Montgomery LegionW/ Column Of Heaven // **6 Toronto, ON** @ Soy Bomb W/ Column Of Heaven, Farang // **7 Buffalo, NY** W/ Gas Chamber // **9 Pittsburgh, PA** @ Mr. Roboto Project W/ Absyme, Illegals& Rabid Pigs // **10 Huntington, WV** @ The elimination Chamber W/ Enzugiri // **11 Louisville, KY** @ Quills Coffee / Astro Black Records W/ whips N Chains // **12 Chicago, IL** @Mousetrap w/ SFN, Sea Of Shit, Future Cops // **14 Minneapolis, MN** @ House Of The Lard w/ Condominium, Scaphe // **15 Minot, ND** @ Taube Museum Of Art // **16 Cheyenne, WY** // **4/20 Calgary, AB**

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Get it, if you can find it.

BROWN SUGAR – "Luvly" EP (Cowabunga)
Did I say "Anti War" was the punk song of the year? I was wrong, it's "Candy" by BROWN SUGAR, who might be, along with CÜLO, my favorite band of this decade, so far. BROWN SUGAR is the rare band, like Boston's CONFINES, who can tastefully tackle sociopolitical issues without narrow-minded PC shortcomings or, for obvious reasons, implicitly racist white guilt. Sexy Eddie is one of my favorite lyricists/frontmen and I'm so sad that this band is no more.

CONFINES – "Some Sick Joke" EP (Labor of Love / Side Two)
I've written way too much about this 7" and its title track, so, as a lazy person, let me just say that it's not only one of my favorite hardcore songs of the year, but that it's also one of the most urgent and important releases in the almost apolitical world of punk and hardcore in 2012.

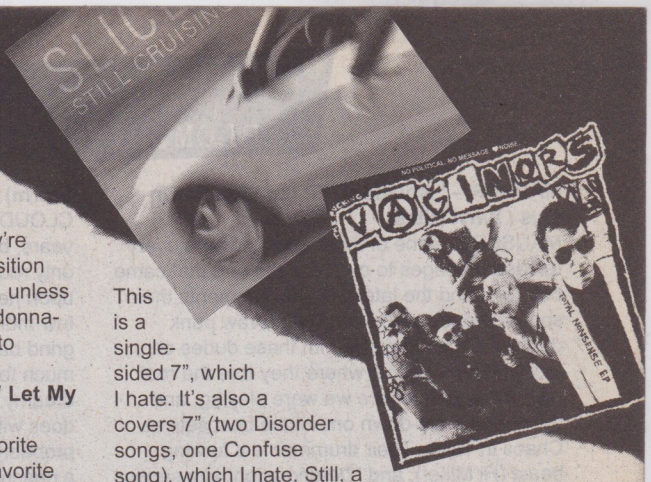
DAWN OF HUMANS – "Blurst of the Birdfish" EP (Toxic State)
DAWN OF HUMANS are probably my favorite recorded band of the whole new breed of NYC punk and hardcore bands and this 7" only expands (or does it abbreviate?) their primitive hardcore style. The production is noticeably "worse" than their perfect second EP, but it fits the more bludgeoning style of this EP. One of New York's finest.

DEATH CAMP – "Teenage Nightmare" EP (Black Rebel)
Rochester, New York, is the last place I thought I'd hear a band like this: ignorant, yet sensual, NYHC/ BEST WISHES worship. A city more known for its rockin' punk (rotcore!), DEATH CAMP stands out on sonic differences alone. Still, they're more than worthy of the black sheep position they must occupy. Not to be missed live, unless you're uncomfortable with the worst Madonna-esque dancing you'll ever see. Prepare to bedroom mosh.

LA MISMA – demo tape (Toxic State / Let My People Go)
This is probably one of my top three favorite punk releases of the year. They're my favorite NYC band and this is one of the best releases to come from the city—and it's just a demo! Spanish-named, Portuguese-sung, Italian-influenced hardcore punk that is driving and catchy. One of the best live acts in the area too.

PEACEBREAKERS – demo tape (self-released)
Wouldn't it be awesome to know what it would be like if NEGATIVE APPROACH still played in the 2000s? Oh wait, they do and it sucks. Knowing that, allow yourself to accept PEACEBREAKERS as your new NEGATIVE APPROACH. This too-short, three-song demo is the best NA-worship I've ever heard. Surprise, surprise, PJ is drumming on it. Absolutely cannot wait to see what they do next. T.T.W.A.M.

STAGNATION – "Three Songs Cover Singles" EP (Hardcore Survives)



This is a single-sided 7", which I hate. It's also a covers 7" (two Disorder songs, one Confuse song), which I hate. Still, a STAGNATION release is novel enough and it's deconstructed enough to the point where I just don't care. All hail STAGNATION!

VAGINORS – "Total Nonsense" 7" (No Patience / Video Disease)
One of the best, if not the best, SWANKYS-worship bands going at the moment. Their LP was sick, but I think this 7" really builds on that. Can't get enough of how brilliantly stupid this is. Can't wait for them to come to America!

ZATSUON – "Violent Noiz Life" EP (Distort Reality)
Amazing GLOOM-worship from NYC. This is the only record they were able to get out before imploding, but it's definitely one to remember. I was honestly shocked at how good this record was, based on how they were when they started, which was bad.

ALEX RATCHARGE

So long, 2012—not gonna miss ya. Please note the thing I blasted the most this year was the incredible IRREPARABLES demo tape, but it was released in 2011. Anyway, in no particular order:

MODRA – "Line for the Men's Room" LP (Savage Quality)
Tunes for homeless city ghosts.

GOOD THROB – "Feminazi" EP (Superfi)
Taking the best of nihilistic punk and giving it a purpose. Brilliant.

BITS OF SHIT – "Cut Sleeves" LP (Homeless)
EDDY CURRENT with a beard and sleeveless everything.

TERCER MUNDO – "Depreción" EP (Cintas Pepe)
"Mexico, 2012 – 60,000 human beings dead. Now go party and score some cocaine." The only REAL hardcore record of the year.

FNU RONNIES – "Saddle Up" LP (Load)
Total freakshow, soundtrack to drug-induced paranoid nightmare, etc.

WHITE COP – "One Sided 12" 12" (Leather Bar)
PUSSY GALORE kicked Spencer outta the band and hired young JAY REATARD before going on a mission to be banned from every single pub in Brisbane. Punk.

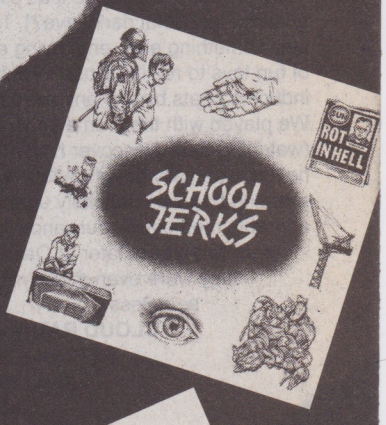
HANK WOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS – "Go Home" 12" (Toxic State)
They kill chickens, don't they?!

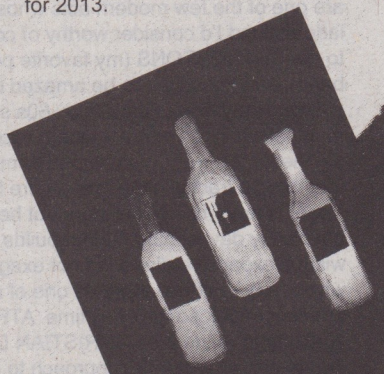
BIG EYES – "Back From the Moon/I Don't Care about Friday Night" (Grave Mistake)
The FASTBACKS reincarnated.

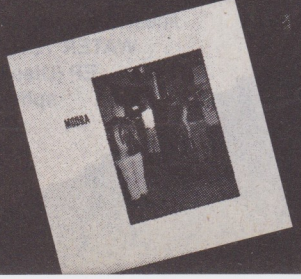
MEAT THUMP – "Box of Wine/ Feel Good" (Negative Guest List)
"If it doesn't feel good, why do I do it?" RIP Brendon.

Runners up: TOTAL CONTROL, DEFORMITY, HOAX, BLANK REALM, ABSURDO, FOLDED SHIRT, LOTUS FUCKER, etc

French bands: A significant number of Frenchies released some noteworthy records and tapes in 2012. I dig some of 'em more than others, but whatever, I *have* to acknowledge the timely rise of good-sounding punk and hardcore bands in this country. I think *MRR* readers should definitely check out VEUVE SS, MOMS ON METH, LE CHÔMAGE, MORSE, LA COURSE A LA MORT, SHORT DAYS, YOUTH AVOIDERS, THE NIGHT STALKERS, DEAD RAMONES, ANXIETY ATTACK, KALTE LUST and a bunch more. Working on a scene report for 2013.







WILL BLOMQUIST

MAUSER – "Isolation" EP (La Vida Es Un Mus / Vinyl Rites)
MAUSER are one of those bands where every release manages to outshine the one that came before it, and the latest 12" only cements their spot at the top of the current US raw punk dogpile. Crossed paths with these dudes on tour in New Orleans, where they tore the roof off the tiny cafe space we were playing, and they had hands-down one of the best sets at Chaos in Tejas. Their drummer is a fucking beast (Hi Mike!), and "Deterioration" is a serious contender for my favorite mid-tempo hardcore song ever. That upcoming tour with FOLKEIIS and MUNDO MUERTO is definitely one of the more exciting things I'm looking forward to in 2013.

PERMANENT RUIN – demo (self-released) + "Hell is Real" EP (Adelante)
There's no question in my mind, PERMANENT RUIN was the Bay Area hardcore band of 2012, playing about a million shows and blowing away every single crowd with their blistering, faster-than-thou anthems of smash. What's not to love? All three of their releases from last year (a bulk of the demo was released as a flexi by Radical Punks Never Die) are shining examples of what DIY can aspire to, with brilliantly searing artwork, lyrics and absolutely killer recordings. Some of the best noise not music made by some of the raddest people in punk. Never sleep.

RØSENKØPF – LP (Weird)
Far and away the most-played new record in my house last year. The eau d'goth was certainly in the air in 2012, but no one can accuse RØSENKØPF of being trend-followers or retro knockoffs, if for no other reason than there's simply no one else making sounds out there quite like this (if you put a gun to my head I guess I'd describe it as psychedelic anarcho-industrial darkwave?). Their live set was something else, employing a whole mess of fun toys to realize those throbbing, trance-inducing beats by any and all means necessary. We played with them on a show in El Paso (watching Soren discover his first night out that he'd accidentally bought a four-foot-long kids sleeping bag was definitely up there for most adorable moment of tour) and when I caught them two weeks later at Oakland's Terminal they were even more mind-bogglingly seamless.

CLOUD RAT – splits with REPUBLIC OF DREAMS (IFB / Moment Of Collapse / React With Protest / 50 Year Storm) and XTRA VOMIT (IFB)
CLOUD RAT have been around for a few years, but like many folks I came across them only recently, having been instantly converted upon hearing their split with XTRA VOMIT a few months ago. CLOUD RAT are indeed a grind band, but one whose lineage has as much to with (fucking great) screamo and the dreamy, esoteric margins of black metal as it does with ASSÜCK (don't worry, these kids probably totally love ASSÜCK too). "Emotive" is a descriptor that would make a lot of true grind fans gag, but fuck 'em, because CLOUD RAT are putting out some of the best loudfastshit in the world right now. Their LP "Moksha" is coming out any day now and I will be shocked if it's not one of the best records of 2013.

ZYANOSE – "Noise Philia 2005-2011" LP (540 / Todo Destruido) + "Isolation" EP (Distort Reality)
Japan's most glorious crasher crust disaster, ZYANOSE have recognized that bringing the chaos is a practice best informed by being totally wasted, and this is an ethos which obviously permeates everything that they do as a band. There were so many memorable sets at Chaos in Tejas (still can't get over how good WINTER was) but ZYANOSE was easily the most boisterous and fun, and their ability to produce absolutely paint-peeling noize punk shriek with two basses and no guitars still has me scratching my head six months later. The discography roundup is totally essential for anyone who recognizes that inner ear canals are extremely overrated, while the new EP shows off a band at the top of their game, doing what they do best and clearly having way too much fun. "Aaaaaaaaaargh" never sounded so sweet.

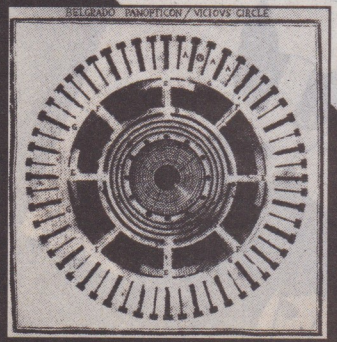
ALARIC / ATRIARCH – split LP (20 Buck Spin)
Another record that I know I'll be listening to for many years to come, this split was the logical conclusion of a long-time affinity between the two bands, who have toured together more than once and who I've personally seen play together more times than I can count. ALARIC are one of the few modern acts whose effects-laden sound I'd consider worthy of comparison to the CHAMELEONS (my favorite post-punk band), and I continue to be amazed by their ability to stay true to their early 80s source material within an utterly modern recording aesthetic. "So Far Down" is one of most memorable tracks in their repertoire but the closer "Weep" is the real standout here, an absolutely devastating riff that builds out into an wistful, expansive dirge; I'm not exaggerating when I say ranks up there as one of my favorite goth/post-punk songs of all time. ATRIARCH continue to refine their CHRISTIAN DEATH-meets-blackened doom approach to great effect, and I think the material here is their finest, most coherent to date.

WATER TORTURE – "Shellfire!" EP (Diseased Audio) + splits w/ SEA OF SHIT (Diseased Audio) and THEDOWNGOING (Nerve Altar)
We have seen the future and it is fucking horrid. Mutants of all stripes will find refuge in the demented sounds of WATER TORTURE, where fist-crushing powerviolence merges with all manner of bleep-blorping electronic goodness to bring the MAN IS THE BASTARD trajectory into the 24th century. Splits with some of the best punky blasters out there right now only seal the deal: WATER TORTURE are one of the most exciting bands I got into last year, and probably the most fun I've had listening to a grind record since that crazy PSUDOKU rewired my consciousness in late 2011.

HEXIS – "Seputus/Fatum" (Black Lake / Skaven / Monotonstudio / Enjoyment / Gardens / Braincrushing) + "X" EP (IFB / Maximum Douglas / Orchid Scent / Parade of Spectres / Panda Banda)
Nightmare music of the highest order. In a year that saw so many mediocre (not to mention sketchy) fusions of black metal and dark hardcore, HEXIS from Copenhagen were one of the few that did it right, integrating European heaviness a la BLACK FREIGHTER into a deliciously nauseating mindfuck that bears an avant-garde kinship with bands like PORTAL and EHNAHRE. No matter how many times I listen to these songs, HEXIS always seems to trigger the same sense of anxiety and impending doom. Then again, I keep putting it back on…

BELGRADO – "Panopticon/Vicious Circle" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
It would have been easy for BELGRADO to stumble or stall after releasing their landmark self-titled LP, but if their newest material is any indication, the creative well has far from run dry. Lucky for the rest of us! As we all know by now, it's easy enough to throw on some reverb and recreate that sound, but BELGRADO set themselves apart from so many post-punk revivalists by writing great fucking songs, and the two at hand are no exception. The vocals—and oh, that guitar tone!—retain an instant familiarity, but with a strangely timeless quality, and there's no denying their mastery when it comes to painting paranoid landscapes with an almost cinematic precision. I don't want to say that their set at 1-2-3-4 Go! was a revelation—that's way too corny—but I think I just did.

COMMUNION OF THIEVES – "To Serve Man" demo (self-released)
At the risk of gushing, COMMUNION OF THIEVES are basically in 'dream band' territory for me, tempering their epic d-beat crust foundation with a dose of gorgeously atmospheric black metal to produce some of the most incredible songs I've heard in the decade or so that I've been listening to punk. Lyrics in Spanish and English explore feminism, religion and the soul-crushing realities of industrial civilization with a first-hand focus on the experiences of immigrants on the U.S./Mexico border, and Alison's perfectly caustic vocals add a whole other dimension to the music. The first time I came through El Paso on tour COMMUNION OF THIEVES was supposed to play but had to drop at the last minute, being replaced by their awesome death metal/crust side project NUCLEAR SCORN.



Needless to say, I was thrilled when we got booked with COMMUNION and RØSENKØPF this time around, and it would be an understatement to say they exceeded all of my expectations; seriously, some of the most inspired drum work I've ever had the pleasure of seeing live. Real talk, there is no band in the world right now whose first full-length I want to hear more.

Reissues
DISCHARGE – All EPs (Havoc)
WARRIOR KIDS – "Les Enfants De L'Espoir" LP (Katorga Works)
THE KNOTS – "Action/Heartbreaker" (Last Laugh)
VARUKERS – "Another Religion, Another War" LP (Havoc)
CURRICULUM MORTIS – "Sentencia de Muerte" LP (Ultra Sonido)
PICTURE FRAME SEDUCTION – "Hand of the Rider" LP (Queer Pills)
THE DICKS – "Hate The Police" EP (1-2-3-4 Go!)
MAN IS THE BASTARD / AUNT MARY – split (Six Weeks)
ABUSE – "Manifest: 1994-2004 Discography" CD (Haunted Hotel)
ABADDON – "Wet Za Wet" LP (Warsaw Pact)

More records that ruled it: D-CLONE –LP, PUTREFACTION LP, REIVERS LP, PASSIV DÖDSHJÄLP EP, NO STATIK EPs + LP, HAMMERS 10", CONDITION EP, NEW FLESH demo, DAWN OF HUMANS EP, CRIMINAL CODE LP + EPs, AGE OF COLLAPSE LP, HUNTING PARTY EP, LOTUS FUCKER LP, SYSTEMATIK demo, FORWARD LP, SICK/TIRED EP, TEMPEST EP, TRAGEDY LP, T.A.D.R.O.E.V. demo, VACCINE/COKE BUST SPLIT, RAPE REVENGE EP, VUEVE S.S. EP + SPLIT, HUMANXWASTE demo, HOST EP, NEON PISS LP, DNF EP, JUNGBLUTH demo, KROMOSOM EP, TO THE POINT EP, ORDSTRO demo, CRIMSON SCARLET 45, YADOKAI EP, SIX BREW BANTHA LP, ANASAZI demo, ARCHAGATHUS/PIZZA HI-FIVE SPLIT, YADOKAI EP, REPLICA demo, GHASTLY SPATS EP

SAM LEFEBVRE

I'll save all of my hyperbole and heavy-handed generalizations for my column this month, which reflects back on the year passed. There is a notable lack of Toxic State LPs on this top-ten list, which is not necessarily because HANK WOOD and CRAZY SPIRIT didn't make a couple of my favorite full-lengths last year, but because I expect so many other lists to represent those albums. I'd rather from abstain from including Toxic State LPs and make room for a less-predictable choice like GOLDEN BOYS who likely won't show up on other lists.
Suss out the hype and iterate your manifesto in 2013. As ever, Sam Lefebvre.

TOP TEN LPS (In No Order)
AMERICAN SNAKESKIN – "Turquoise for Hello" LP (Janitor's Closet)
I review this record in this issue, so I won't dive into the gritty hyperbole that constitutes my praise for this group. It went relatively overlooked when it came out in the middle of 2012. It seemed that the release was delayed, it was on a brand new label and by the time of its arrival the members had either moved on to other projects or moved away from the area. Despite that, it's absolutely essential for anyone following the maladjusted noise produced by NEON BLUD, DIET COKEHEADS and their Florida ilk. I understand another record was completed, but it's future is uncertain.
SEX CHURCH – "Somnambulist" LP (Instant Pleasure / Psychic Handshake)
Unlike many groups operating in a similar vein throughout 2012, SEX CHURCH isn't a pure death rock pastiche. For the Vancouver quartet, death rock is merely a departure point. *Somnambulist* is fraught with staggering intensity that reaches impossible crescendos, but each song is unique for seeming to follow some thematic arch, as if SEX CHURCH is writing a narrative to despair—from casual malaise through abject misery, *Somnambulist* contains the accompanying musical segment for the incremental descent into misery and beyond.
NEON BLUD – "Discoteque Deathbed" LP (Vinyl Rites)
On this record, NEON BLUD draws on its knack for stretching song-structures to unreasonable lengths to a devastating epitome. The band reimagines the common rock trope of a "train wreck" ending in impossibly violent terms. The metal continues to contort and passengers continue to wail for long after the initial crash. Crescendos stretch for miles and then decelerate just as gratuitously, like a surreal endurance drive through mountainous terrain with only an elusive mirage on the horizon. This tactic is even evident in the details. Single notes are sustained on the guitar for measures on end. The sense of each song being a mash-up of individually conceived parts played sequentially and bridged with dissonance would indicate poor song-writing in less devious hands, but NEON BLUD substantiates the technique by deftly creating punishing and bleak atmospherics.
TIMMY'S ORGANISM – "Raw Sewage Roq" LP (In the Red)
In my dreams, Timmy Vulgar crawls out of a steaming manhole in Detroit, guitar in tow, and gives me advice on life. He says, "Take this LSD and vacuum the ceiling, stick *Raw Sewage Roq* on your year end top ten in *MRR* and set your critical faculties against the fucking charlatans that make you hesitant to call something 'garage rock' in a non-pejorative way." I abide.
CRIMINAL CODE – "Cold Thought" 12" (Inimical)
Leaders amongst 2012's handful of bands that bring a hardcore sensibility to music employing post-punk tropes, CRIMINAL CODE is humorless, austere and fierce. The individual instrumental performances are savage and the vocals convey a burly mean-spiritedness. CRIMINAL CODE commands a death rock guitar aesthetic and writes brooding, dynamic song-structures, but doesn't trivialize those assets with moping as so many new post-punk bands do. It's a relatively new phenomenon, one that I would apply to much of my favorite records from 2012, but CRIMINAL CODE may very well do it best.
BITS OF SHIT – "Cut Sleeves" LP (Homeless)
Some records don't need to be explained by music critics. Their inherent musical value evident upon first listen, a discussion of the subtext of certain records becomes irrelevant. *Cut Sleeves* by BITS OF SHIT is an instance of this. Any assessment of *Cut Sleeves* must invariably descend into colorful hyperbole if a critic is to write honestly. Years from now, when a handful of Australian records are referenced to giddily illustrate the country's inexplicably reliable punk output in and around 2012, *Cut Sleeves* will be among them. *Cut Sleeves* channels the inherent vitality of punk without needing to add any trending reference point to distinguish itself. That can be said of very few records in 2012.
TERRIBLE FEELINGS – "Shadows" LP (Deranged)
After a slew of three giddily received singles, many people complained of *Shadows* lyrics. They were perceived as being too blunt or heavy-handed, but I level no such disparaging towards *Shadows*. The lyrics are thematically in line with the three preceding singles, revealing cohesiveness that's rare for a punk band that isn't consistently political, deliberately offensive or willfully asinine in its lyrical content. Punk lyrics are often unintelligible, so it's tempting to suppose that listeners who bemoan *Shadows* lyrics are subconsciously reacting to their discomfort when faced with an entire album's worth of well-enunciated words. For a punk to disparage *Shadows* for its lyrics is likely the externalization of their opposition to intelligible lyrics, especially ones earnestly about being sad, which isn't a fair criticism. So, *Shadows* is incredible for all of the same reasons TERRIBLE FEELINGS' singles are incredible, which is lengthily described elsewhere, and I used this space instead to hastily articulate what some punks' negative reaction to *Shadows* may actually reveal about those very punks. Hopefully it's more provocative than describing TERRIBLE FEELINGS' darkened melodic punk in the great Swedish tradition.
SYNTHETIC ID – "Apertures" (1-2-3-4 Go!)
Apertures' conjures a distinctly urban sense of alienation. It reflects the singular restlessness of disenfranchisement from a massive population—when buildings are towering predators and commuter crowds signify impending doom. There's no musical formula to this theme, but it's perfectly encapsulated on *Apertures*. While many proponents of modern post-punk often digress into atmospherics and moody dawdling, SYNTHETIC ID is assertive and fiercely present on its recordings. Jake Dudley's sinuous and trebly guitar riffs are the obvious musical focal point, but Paul Lucich's circular bass grooves effectively reinforce the general unruliness. Each track is then propelled by crisp, eighth note centric drum beats. Never veering into saturation

or clamor, the sparseness of *Apertures'* recording is vital to SYNTHETIC ID's sound. The clarity and space between each instrument actually maximizes the neurotic mood. All the while, vocalist Nic Lang's monotonous shout provides an ideal counterpoint to the otherwise volatile sounds.

GOLDEN BOYS – "Dirty Fingernails" LP (12XU)

The GOLDEN BOYS command a radiant pop sensibility that miraculously permeates every inebriated mess they put to vinyl. Through the poor fidelity, glaring musical mistakes and often flippant vocal atonality, the GOLDEN BOYS convey exuberance completely free of posturing or pandering. The GOLDEN BOYS are accessible but they aren't purposefully striving to endear themselves. So many groups desperately strive to make palatable tunes and fall all over themselves in the process—the Golden Boys make even more palatable tunes with seemingly little effort and don't seem to care whether anyone notices or not. For their singular approach to what I'll hesitantly call "garage-pop," the GOLDEN BOYS are an anomaly.

CULTURE KIDS – 12" (Make-a-mess)

Straight-ahead hardcore from a group of esteemed locals who've consistently proved their live prowess and now have the torrid wreck put to a great big black disc that spins at 45 RPM. Their music is burly with class and harkens back to eighties USHC with a knowing glance while asserting their music's relevancy to their own scene and their own era. The vocalist's delivery evokes the image of a head recoiling from the microphone after every impassioned snarl, like the tactic of a singer who has only ever known inept, rented PA systems at basement gigs. It's tempting to drop the adage, "recorded in a garbage can," but that wouldn't quite do it justice. This record sounds more like it was recorded in a plummeting elevator, with all of the urgency elicited by fatal certitude.

TOP TEN 7"S IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER

MEAT THUMP – "Box Of Wine/Feel Good" (Negative Guest List), **HOMOSTUPIDS** – "New York Jammin" EP (HoZac), **FILTHY GAZE OF EUROPE** – "On Fire/Domestic Accidents" (Ugly Pop), **CATATONIC YOUTH** – "Piss Scene" EP (Perennial), **TELEDETENTE 666** – "Les Rats/Panne Sexe" (Sweet Rot), **TELEDROME** – "Double Vision" EP (Hozac), **SHOPPERS/ PANZRAM** – split EP (IFB/Feeble Minds), **SYNTHETIC ID** – "White Walls" EP (Cut the Cord That...), **CRIMINAL CODE** – "Hollowed" EP (Deranged), **DIAT** – "Pick a Line/No Accent" (Iron Lung)

GOLNAR NIKPOUR

*This year's best records tickled every one of my punk fancies. Bedroom girl gang punk? Check. Raw and vicious South American hardcore? Yup. Cretin-level X-Claim worship? Why not! A live tape featuring an impromptu demand that the listener "*smoke weed!*"...? But of course! A top eleven, as per my usual (as if anyone's been paying attention).*

POTTY MOUTH – "Sun Damage" 12" (Feeble Minds / Puzzle Pieces / Ride the Snake)

When I am 147 years old and telling future humans about the year 2012, I will tell them that this was the year of POTTY MOUTH. 2012 saw these Massachusetts ladies release a great demo tape before this 12" and a short-but-sweet tour tape after, but *Sun Damage* was by far their tour-de-force. Their name—and playful but mischievous songs—are clearly a nod to personal heroes BRATMOBILE, but unlike those juvenile delinquents, POTTY MOUTH has spent a bit of time learning how to harmonize to extra-fuzzy fourth-generation copies of the *C86* cassette. This is punk-pop perfection for the getting of all of your summer kicks.

CREEM – 12" – (Katorga Works / Deranged)

There are a lot of different micro-scenes in New York City these days. There are the raw punk kids with shoelaces around their heads and cocaine residue on their nostrils. There are the one-foot-out-the-punk-scene-door beer-soaked garage type kids. There are cynical-from-the-day-they-were-born art school types. There are some leftover eye-rolling mysterious guys. There are those of us in the Old People Punk Scene who reminisce whilst standing by the back wall about the good/bad old days when ABC No Rio was still a regular hangout and the only cool band in town was the almighty DISTRAUGHT. And, of course, there is a scene around the Katorga Works label in Brooklyn that includes the members of CREEM. I don't care about any of those micro-distinctions, and I have nothing pithy to say about this band. Their formula is simple: Boston HC, circa 1982. Their execution is flawless: every riff is cause to backflip into the pit. This is a hardcore punk record that reminds even those of us who don't buy quite as many hardcore punk records as we used to, that hardcore punk is the best of all the musics.

WHITE LUNG – "Sorry" 12" (Deranged)

Something about the hype machine surrounding this band turned me into an instant skeptic. But *fuck,* this record is just incredible. I admit; I already begrudgingly liked their first LP from 2010. And then they took a bit of the wind out of my cranky harrumphing with their blistering live set in Brooklyn early in the year. But I was still a skeptic when I picked this LP up a few months back, sort of half *hoping* not to like it. Instead, I got a 12" with ten songs that practically make me weep so much so I long to have written them myself. From the moment the needle hits the first groove on *Sorry*, desperation-soaked vocals fight for the listener's attention with brilliant, way-up-on-the-fret-board guitar parts. I guess you could sorta call this "rock'n'punk" though it kinda lurches at hardcore speeds and features ultra raw and vicious vocal parts. Yumi says it reminds her of BARN AV REGNBUEN (something about the high guitar parts), which further goes to show how crazy and good yet how difficult it is to describe this band's sound. In any case, it's a stone classic whatever we haters may think. Their Euro tour single is a stomper too.

VAARALLINEN – "Hautausmaa" flexi EP (Full Force Hardcore Destruction)

I wonder if when I am a senior citizen eating nothing but applesauce and vitamin dust I will still be eagerly mail-ordering obscure international hardcore flexis from places like Singapore (the country from which VAARALLINEN hails) and vociferously approving of the trebly, Finnish-HC-worship contained therein. One can only hope! I know very little about this band, but the paper-thin guitar warble featured on this flexi is all I really need to know, as it features just the right amount of *pissaa ja paskaa.*

KAKKA-HÄTÄ 77 – "Huoltoasemalle Unohdettu Mies" LP (Stupido)

This record is this year's entry for my seemingly annual came-out-at-the-end-of-last-year-but-not-really-heard-until-this-year pick. Are you a punk rocker who enjoys listening to catchy, stupid, wonderful, two-chords-two-fingers punk rock? If you answered yes, I really don't see how you could not like this anthem-laden Finnish LP. Don't be afraid to pogo!

FRACASO – "Desafio Antiautoritario" EP (self-released)

I enjoy raw, stripped down DISCHARGE-worship much, much more than I enjoy chunky, beefed up DISCHARGE worship. This is why I don't care at all about the vast majority of Euro crust (despite their DISCHARGE T-shirts) but I do care about this sincere and inept anarcho hardcore band from Venezuela (whose members presumably also have a DISCHARGE T-shirt or two in their collective wardrobe). FRACASO is in the best of the tradition outlined by early ANTI-CIMEX, insofar as they somehow manage to find *excess* in DISCHARGE and strip that away until reaching the barest bones, creating a thoroughly unrelenting five minutes of thrash.

MILK MUSIC – "Almost Live" cassette (self-released)

Who am I kidding, I am just crazy about MILK MUSIC. But how can I make you understand what I feel when I listen to their music? If only I could just plug you into that catchy guitar noodle/riff in the chorus of "I've Got a Wild Feeling"—aka the best new song I heard this year—because those three notes say it way better than I ever could about this perfect American indie punk band.

HERPES – "Fight On" EP (Goblin Shark)

I am a person who likes many different subgenres of punk rock. I can't help it. I've never been able to be one of those only-listens-to-Japanese-flexi-core or only-listens-to-Belgian-youth-crew or only-listens-to-one-man-garage-hootenany people. And yet, here I am, extolling the virtues of yet another noize-laden Scandi-thrash-worship unit featuring one of the geniuses behind upstate NY's favorite sons NO FUCKER. Maybe I am predictable in my tastes after all. And yet, this record *looks* pretty weird, with a giant Jabba-the-Hutt looking motherfucker drawn on the cover, perhaps by a PCP addicted toddler? Don't ask me to explain it,

friends, just come over to my place and ask me to throw this record on the turntable while we self-medicate with *Fight On*'s glorious buzzsaw sounds. Easy listening for those of us who *prefer* our ears bleeding.

CRIATURAS – "Oscuridad Eterna" 12" (Lengua Armada)

After releasing a much loved demo in 2010, and an even better EP in 2011, Austin, TX's CRIATURAS take a victory lap with this utterly flawless 12". Really, at this point they are just mocking the rest of us with their impeccable blend of the best influences of a quarter century of global thrash, more-over-the-top-than-even-Japanese-HC guitar pyrotechnics, and tormented-banshee-from-hell vocal howling. On top of that, they were the best band I saw in 2012. Fuck, I wonder what they're gonna do in 2013?!

IRREPARABLES – demo cassette (self-released)

One of DIY punk's most prolific and brilliant auteurs is the inimitable Teodoro Hernandez, whose many inspired and crude bands have included DESTRUCCION, OTAN, FIRMEZA 10, etc. What ties those bands together is an unadulterated love for anarchist principles and DISCHARGE records. What this IRREPARABLES cassette—a demo by a newer Teodoro band—surprisingly does *not* feature, however, is any iota of a relationship to those doomsday D-beaters from What's-So-Great-Britain. Instead, IRREPARABLES manages to make *more* DIY and *more* no-fi the classic DEAD MOON template, with charming, out-of-tune Fred & Toody-esque "singing" over memorable pop tunes with titles like "I Wanna Make a Fanzine." This tape also doubles as a perfect litmus test: if you like it, you're punk. If you don't, you're not. It's as simple as that.

STRESSORS – "Psychotic Break" EP (Warthog Speak)

Conventional wisdom tells us that '90s hardcore sux. This means that conventional wisdom does not recognize TALK IS POISON, LOS CRUDOS, JOHN HENRY WEST, BORN AGAINST, etc. for the giants that they are. I know how you people feel about the dreaded '90s, so I will not damn the Bay Area's STRESSORS by telling you that they are a "'90s-styled band" (whatever the hell that means). In part because they also obviously owe more than a nod or two to pissed-off '80s and '00s hardcore. In any case, this is raw, angry, stressed out HC that drinks from the same poisoned well as the best of Bay Area punk since CHRIST ON PARADE roamed the streets. More than nailing a style and leaving it at that, however, these gents nailed down some great *songs*. That, my friends, is the difference between an OK record that I file away and forget and a record I actually keep listening to and stick onto this year-end best of list. Got that, readers? Good, 'cause it's time to get working on 2013 and go start your own bands, OK!

Reissues:

DICKS – "Hate the Police" EP (1-2-3-4 Go!)
MISSBRUKARNA – "Zooma In En Zombie" LP (Skrammel)
JOHN HENRY WEST – "Door Bolted Shut" LP (Ebullition)
INOCENTES and **LIXOMANIA** EPs (Nada Nada Discos / Spicoli)
The **GUNS** – 2xLP (Smog Veil / Red Hour)
BRAUSEPÖTER – "Bundeswehr / Keiner Kann Uns Ab" (Wild Isle)
V/A – "Las 4 Bandas" LP (Lengua Armada)
ASTRONAUTS – "Survivors" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

Honorable Mentions: This year the honorable mentions were truly in nearly as heavy rotation as the records listed above. A different day or a different mood, any of the below could have made the cut:

JUANITA Y LOS FEOS – "Pesadilla Adulta" (Munster)
GOOD THROB – "Feminazi" EP (Superfi)
WOOLF – "The Right Way to Play" 12" (La Vida Es Un Mus)
WEIRD TV – 12" (Perennial)
PIG DNA – demo cassette (self-released)
ANTI-ARMADA – LP (Sin Temores / Ke Ruido Tan Hp)
POTTY MOUTH – "Bad Bad" demo cassette (self-released)
HONEYSUCK – EP (Queen of Swords)
CISMA – demo cassette (Alta Intensidaz).

The best in non-records:

Get Shot – Martin Sorrondeguy (Make a Mess)
This photobook is probably the best, most beautiful thing the DIY punk scene produced this year. Spanning nearly three decades of punk photography by Martin Sorrondeguy, *Get Shot* is a gorgeous labor of love that deserves to be seen by every punk alive.

Scam #7 – *The History of Black Flag's Damaged* (self-released)
An example of what punk scholarship *should* be. I have been reading about BLACK FLAG for nearly two decades and this fanzine taught me a crazy amount of stuff I didn't know!

VIKTOR VARGYAI

Lists are stupid, but being a fan is the coolest thing.

LPS

SICKOIDS – LP (Residue)

Talking about punk perfection. SICKOIDS is the first band that made me want to do a list this year, they are that good—it has to be said as many times as it's possible. They rise above almost all the other records from this year. This record has everything that's good in punk—it's raw, desperate, melodic, angry, unstoppable, filthy, smart, ugly, young. And while it's everything you have already loved, this band uses the old tools to create a new shape. To stay just what we all like: total sonic destruction that hears like love songs written by kids whose hobby is burning cop cars.

RAT COLUMNS – "Sceptre Hole" LP (SmartGuy)

Winter is cool. No one's out on the streets, lights are on due to the early darkness, mist clouds everywhere, nice cloths. RAT COLUMNS is not only the soundtrack for me for these amazing days, but will be for the upcoming seasons as well. I feel like it's a soundtrack for a documentary about my life, about our lives—it has so many different sounds and emotions it's like this all. It's like music that has to be made cause it's in everybody who is a beautiful loser. This is what I'm listening to when I gaze in everyday daze. Amazing stuff.

MERCHANDISE – "Children of Desire" LP (Katorga Works)

I reached a point with listening to this record that made me put this band into the guilty pleasure category 'cause it was embarrassing how much I played this record. I played this when friends came over, when I went out on wet summer nights to get drunk at islands, when I went on dates, when I came home after failed dates. When we were just hanging out, eating spaghetti after midnight—all the fucking time. Even at work where people started digging it. This is just beautiful and ugly, a whole universe under a blanket, where people who maybe pushed down inside, and by life go into their strange rooms and create something among their four walls that is bigger than life. NEW ORDER plays BEAT HAPPENING songs, which are as serious as ANGELS OF LIGHTS with a NEU! sound. Eat drugs and dance love.

CREEM – LP (Deranged / Katorga Works)

I remember when glue-sniffing punks were opening for bands like TERROR. When I was sixteen I thought Bridge 9 was the best label ever. Then there was a growing ditch between punk and hardcore, but at one point in the recent past, bands started to appear who could grab both the punk and the hardcore scenes' attention. I mean those who are way deep in their own subgenres. CREEM is a perfect example for this 'cause they are fucking amazing. Skinheads with sneakers, edge people in "smoke stinks"

shirts. They are disgusting in a way LIFE'S BLOOD or NEGATIVE APPROACH were, mixing that amazing blocked rage *Clockwork Orange* violence of the BLITZ sound with filthy New York trash era hardcore. This band proved me that room moshing could be fun.

BAADER BRAINS – "New Era Hope Colony" 12" (Empyre / Clean Plate / Ebullition)

Sometimes it bums me out how some bands that actually sound pretty good have nothing to say. And sometimes I get bummed out 'cause I'm too dumb to understand everything BAADER BRAINS is saying. This band is amazing 'cause you can feel, hear and read that these people put their time, creativity, message and power into these songs expanding them to their fullest capabilities. And the result is some unique record that is everything that is good in punk with the all over message of everything that's good in being an intelligent mammal. And there's a United Mutation cover!

CRIMINAL CODE – "Cold Thought" 12" (Inimical)

CRIMINAL CODE had a word about them before their sounds reached me. Most of the time this triggers high hopes in me and the higher you go, the harder you can fall. I put this record on for the first time and it was just beyond my imagination. Bands like CRIMINAL CODE: I can only call them punk because they are bringing the essential of the genre, as much as there is only this word describes them the best. They sound modern, yet timeless; they are powerful, yet melodic; raw, yet smart. The wall-of-sound guitars with their everyday life gloom. There's tension in every one of their songs, which is constantly rising—it's like brilliant punk through an overdrive. Every sound is killer on this one. This was probably the best guitar centric record this year.

NEON PISS – LP (Deranged / Cut the Chord That...)

This record had to grow on me. I loved their demo and their live performances. While the record is almost the same, it sounded so monumental in their final studio form that it was too much to digest in the first couple listens. They not only put their melodies, desperation and anger into these songs, but the overall record is filled with well-thought construction of punk awesomeness. It makes you gather, and while you skate around a smashed cop stations parking lot, you could sing along to these amazing anthems of the strange youth.

PUFFY AREOLAS – "1982: Dishonorable Discharge" (HoZac)

Ordinary thing about smoking weed regularly is even when you are sober you imagine how better things were if you were stoned. Ordinary thing about PUFFY AREOLAS is that they make you feel you are stoned and it's 5 am, but you still just want to fuck your brain up with more materials. This sounds like if some crazy scientist drugged VOID and made them into a creepy psychedelic hardcore jam band. Perfect background music for garden parties where you smoke your night in burning plastic among bile puking punks.

D-CLONE – "Creation and Destroy" 12" (540)

They said no emotions or memories in this list, but I first heard this record in a filthy basement when two noise-not-music head friends were blasting it making silly faces and satanic hand signs. Music like this has always depressed me in a way, but I have realized it's more than fun. This record is amazing. It's so distorted and loud and noisy and fast beyond being able to keep up with them—it turns into something grotesquely beautiful that's like funny or happy while it's not. It's the evil baby parents' love, but everybody else hates. This is music what your grandma thinks you are listening to when you tell her about punk. Full-blown noise terror, which makes you spill your beer on leather jackets. I could say punk and hardcore, but seriously this sonic madness is in another universe.

UV RACE – "Racism" LP (In the Red)

For some reason I always end up listening to UV RACE and their new record is maybe their best to date. I like it when music sounds like it would be fun to hang with the people who are making it. This record is just fun 'cause post-punk supposed to be fun. Whatever, this is the only time that racism was ever cool in history.

7"

COFFIN PRICKS – "Group Home Haircut" (Stationary (Heart)) SHAVED WOMEN – Static (Pass Judgement) DARK TIMES – "Girl Hate" (Fysisk Format) LOWER – "Walk On Heads" (Escho) SHOPPERS / PANZRAM – split (Feeble Minds) HOMOSTUPIDS – "New York Jammin'" (HoZac) WHITE LUNG – "Two of You/Hunting Holiday" (Sabotage)

Tapes

PISS CRYSTALS – This is crazy. Hailing from Budapest, Hungary PISS CRYSTALS is mixing Kraut rock, noise, hardcore punk and BLACK SABBATH-ish jams. And they end up sounding like DINOSAUR JR playing DEEP WOUND songs. Soooo good.

REPLICA – This band is a total fucking rager and there is no question they are the band of 2012. Angry people creating amazing noise. My vocabulary is not enough for, I'd rather just bang my head to their totally awesome sounds.

SPIRITUAL WARRIORS – Now this is what makes me happy. Some stoned hippies blasting distorted love hardcore. How the fuck did it happen that the live recording on their tape is way better than the studio one? Anyway, this is the music that I like.

CAGED ANIMAL – I was at a hardcore show where the singer said, "the next jam is a stomper". No idea what that is, but listening to this demo makes me wanna kick myself in the head with a boot it's that good. Delete me from facebook if you disagree.

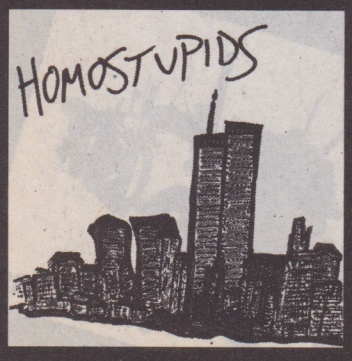
INDEX – Reverbed fun punk perfection for dreamy cool bedroom dance parties. The sounds are fitting shitty tattoos, awesome haircuts and midnight parking lot skate jams. This band is just so effortlessly cool that listening to them will make you cool as well—in the punk way.

PROXY – If you like drinking beer, hanging with friends, wearing nice cloths and yelling Oi! too much, this will be your band. Nah, they are way better with melodies and overall music that it's like Oi! music for everyone. Anyway, this is a crazy good demo even for closet skinheads.

KAT SMITH

BLOODKROW BUTCHER – "Anti War" EP + live (Side Two)

These guys are like my brothers, and I love their band, so it's a win/win relationship. I toured with these Lowell boys in May and this 7" represents them perfectly. This shit is just fucking mean. PJ has to be one of the most intimidating front men ever, with vocals that make cowards take a knee solely out of respect. My neck was fucking rubber by the end of their set at Subversion, 'cause if you aren't moshing or pogoing, you are headbanging L.A.M.F. As soon as I put this record on, it brought me back to tour and how much fun it was hanging with these dudes and seeing them play eleven consecutive sets! BKB sound like if DISARM were from Boston, but better. It's been one hell of a year, you dudes were part of what made it so great. And hot damn, this is the #1 record of the year, in my opinion.



KOWARD – "Overbred" EP (Total Fucker)

This record is perfect. It's constantly stuck in my head. "Sick of Junkies, So Sick of Dope." It's simple, straight-forward, but with blazing energy that makes me really bummed I didn't catch them a Chaos last year. There's no way they aren't amazing live...if you ever get the opportunity to see them, do it. If you didn't jump on this when it came out, you may have trouble finding it now, and for good reason. Holy shit. So fucking killer. I don't even own this record, as I have not been able to track it down, and it's the only thing mentioned on here that I do not own. Sad face.

REPLICA – demo + live (self-released)

They don't even have a record out yet (just a demo tape + demo flexi), but every punk in the US knows about them—they are a force to be reckoned with, the almighty REPLICA. I was at their first show and by the end of their set people in the crowd were already saying they were the best band in the Bay Area. Dharma really brings it with her gnarly throat-ripping vocals and jaw-dropping stage presence live, and I am convinced if she weren't on vocals, the band would not be nearly as raging as they are. Not to discredit the other talented members, who are all tight as fuck. Just really fucking solid hardcore. Stoked for their new releases in 2013.

S.H.I.T. – demo tape (self-released)

So good. So fucking good. I felt very similarly

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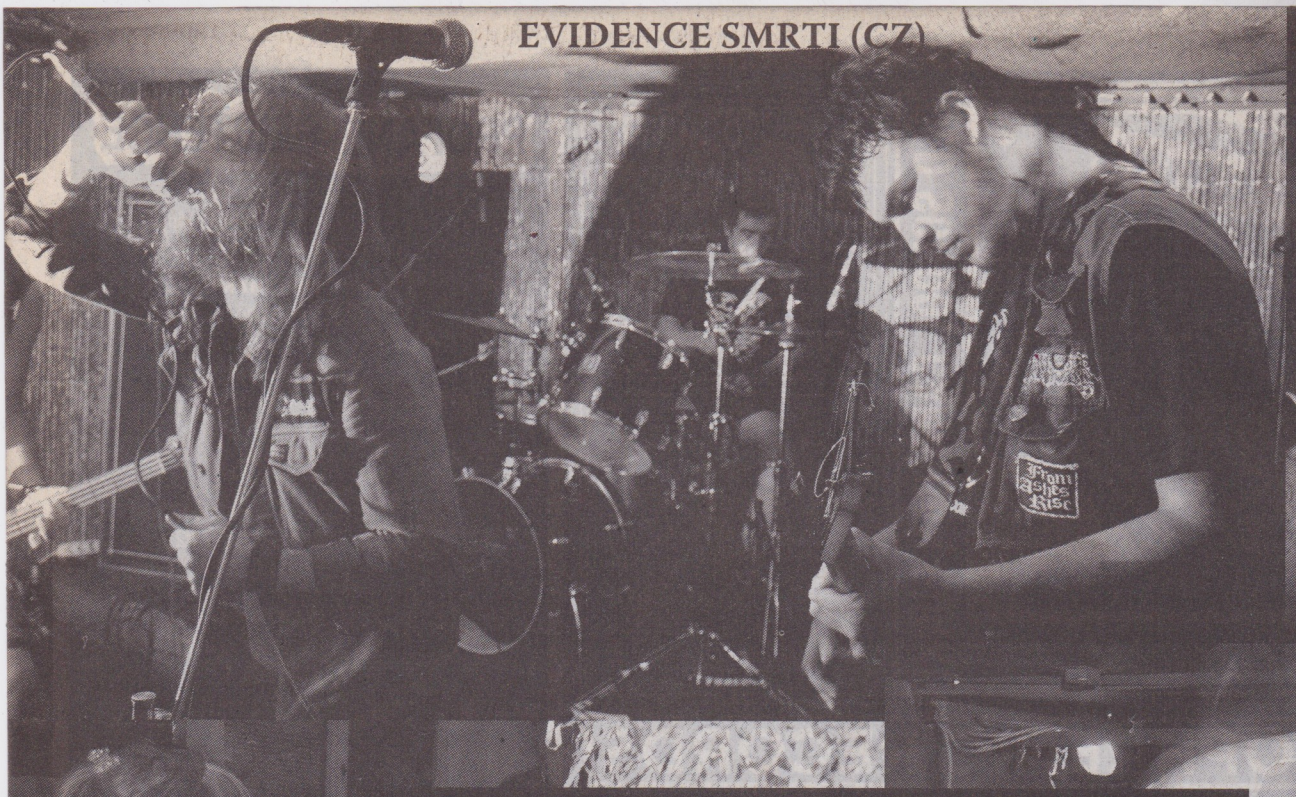


EVIDENCE SMRTI (CZ)

Photos by: Smrčák of Play Fast or Don't festival

IDIOT PARADE (SK)

BOILING POINT (SK)

LYCANTHROPY (CZ)

INSUICIETY (DE)

THE BOLD & THE BEAUTIFUL (POL)
SPLITTER (SWE)
IDIOT SAVANT (DE)
NEEDFUL THINGS (CZ)
CAPITALIST CASUALTIES (US)
AFTER THE BOMBS (CAN)
WOLLONGONG (CZ)

about the KREMLIN demo (2011), and it just so happens they are both from Toronto—which clearly has a killer fucking scene right now. S.H.I.T. is a lot more aggressive than KREMLIN, and I heard from multiple trustworthy sources that they absolutely destroy live! Twangy raw D-beat is a beautiful thing, and S.H.I.T. really bring their A-game. Can't wait for the LP.

GREEN BERET – "Violence is their Currency" 12" (Side Two)

Yet another heavy hitter from Boston, who in my opinion has the best fucking scene band-wise in the country. I heard this isn't a "real" band, meaning they don't play shows often, and they are mostly a recording project. I hope that isn't true, but either way, this 12" fucking owns my soul. It's hard to believe this is from 2012, not 1983. If DISCHARGE and POISON IDEA had a bastard hate child, GREEN BERET would be it, and completely mangled and deformed at that—in a good way.

BIRTH DEFORMITIES – "Suburbanized" 10" (Cowabunga)

I admit, I snagged this as soon as I read Dan Goetz' review of it without knowing of them at all, and boy was it a great decision. Hand screened inner sleeve by B. Hutch and puke-colored marble vinyl. Fucking beautiful. The killer music helps too. The haunting intro and Peni-esque backing vocals are what stood out the most to me. This release embodies almost everything I crave in a record, it's raw, it's hardcore, it's dark, it's ugly—it's punk. I know nothing about this band other than I love this 10", I hope I get to catch them live at some point in 2013!

BELGRADO – "Panopticon/Vicious Circle" + live

Seeing BELGRADO live was mind blowing. I heard this 7" at the compound after seeing them for the first of three times within a weeks time, and I recognized "Vicious Circle" from their set. It's probably my favorite BELGRADO song, with "In My Head" from the LP being a close second. These people are musicians. They are talented performers. They are also nice as hell and some of the coolest punks you'll ever meet. I feel as if they left a lasting impression on the majority of people who saw them on their recent US/Canadian tour, including many punks who don't usually listen to that style. BELGRADO are just that good.

DESPERAT – "Demokrati Eller Diktatur?" EP (Beach Impediment reissue)

I actually got assigned this record for review a few months back by mistake (the first press was already reviewed within the past year), so the review never ran in the zine. I am so glad I was assigned this record, cause this band rules hard and I was unaware of them prior to the assignment. With raw, catchy riffs and spine-melting vocal patterns, this is a fantastic Swedish hardcore record that you need to get immediately. Jocke's vocals are beyond perfection, chilling, in fact. The members of this band know exactly what they're doing, and are veterans of Swedish punk, pretty much hitting every nail on the head as far as criteria for amazing, raw hardcore. I don't know what is left to say, besides buy this fucking record if you consider yourself a fan of Swedish hardcore. Thank you Beach Impediment for repressing this in the states.

PERMANENT RUIN – "Hell is Real" EP + live (Adelante)

PERM RU is a band that gives me fucking chills live. Their intensity stands completely on it's own, and it sucks you in and spits you out. Without a doubt, the most underrated band in the Bay Area, if not the whole West Coast. They are incredibly humble though, and the nicest people and valued members of the scene here. Mariam's vocals are my favorite of any current band; she sounds so fucking pissed and passionate, and seriously makes every other vocalist seem insincere as fuck. Fred, Rich and Jason are so in synch with one another, so incredibly on top of their sound. I feel very fortunate to have this band in my scene. East Coast punks: catch them on their East Coast tour in April 2013!

STOIC VIOLENCE – 12" [test press]

I don't think this is actually out yet, but Branden whipped up some hand-screened covers and made 100+ test press copies to sell exclusively at Subversion Vol. 1, where they fucking killed it. *Killed it.* This 12" is insanely brutal. Violent hardcore with over the top painful vocals. This band really provides a bridge from the hardcore scene to the raw punk scene in L.A., which is essential, as both scenes are strong as fuck!

FRENZY – "Noizey Trouble" EP (Distort Reality)

This 7" managed to slip under the radar for 2012 "must have" records, but it's one of the best ones that came out. If you don't already own this, you are doing something wrong. The core members of NERVESKADE, with the addition of a noizey second bass and a scrawny maniac on vocals. But don't think of it as NERVESKADE, this record definitely stands on its own. This is the best active band in Portland, and I'm stoked I'll finally get to see them in 2013.

LIVE SHOWS

BRAIN TUMORS live @ the Fortress

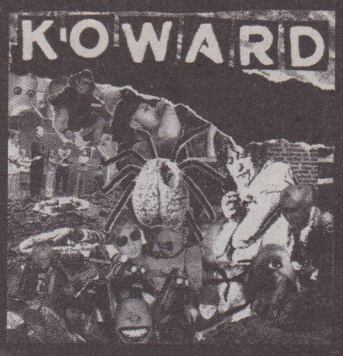
BRAIN TUMORS go fucking nuts when they play, and rightfully so; their music is straight up aggressive, intense, raging hardcore. Joel's bass lines are weirdly haunting and Pat's guitar playing is genius... the song writing is so killer, and the drums are insane. I feel BT is a very underrated current band. They aren't gimmicky like a lot of newer hardcore bands, they don't try too hard like a lot of other new hardcore bands either—they play violent, ugly hardcore because that's what they like to play, unapologetically. It's genuine and it fucking rules. They are also very down to earth people, who were great company and hilarious to be around. I need to see them again stat!

NO STATIK live @ Prank Fest

If you went to Prank Fest 2012, I'm sure you would agree that the local bands dominated, NO STATIK being the best band that played. Holy shit, what a set. They played in the side room at the Metro and it was completely packed, as soon as they started making noise, the crowd immediately went nuts. Punks that haven't been in the pit in years were getting into it and tearing it up! Musically, NO STATIK is dark, simple and to the point, with agonizing vocals from Ruby, and their live performance really sets them above the rest of current hardcore bands.

RØSENKØPF live @ Retox Lounge

As Kevin Manion said after their set, "This is what music in 2012 should sound like," and I couldn't agree more. This band's LP is amazing and unique, but live is it's own entity entirely. Each



member of this three-piece is an incredible musician on their own, and together it's absolutely astounding to watch. Every member of the audience was in a trance during their set, letting the music seep into their brains, engulfing them in sound. Emil's kit was insane—half micro kit, and half electronic kit--which made it even more interesting to watch his already incredibly creative drumming. Saira's smooth bass playing and Soren's talented guitar work were also incredible—I'm so stoked these people came together to make music.

NEEDLES live @ House of the Dead Rat

Hands down, best active band in California. All of them have so much experience playing in bands, their chemistry is unsurpassed on stage. They always, always steal the show when they play, making them one of the only "headliners" locally. Martin owns the mic so hard, making it look incredibly effortless to have such composed, yet aggressive stage presence. I seriously cannot express how good they are—hopefully one day they will tour outside the Bay Area!

DISABLE live @ Subversion Vol 1, Day 1

I am all about Ben on vocals; DISABLE is so good already, then with the addition of Ben's permanence on vocals, it makes their sound incredibly Swedish. They headlined Day 1 of Subversion, which were all solid as fuck sets, some of them the best sets I'd ever seen the West coast bands play. DISABLE was such a great way to end the night, they were powerful, catchy and all around fun as fuck to dance/pogo to. For only being three dudes, their sound is impressively massive.

SICKOIDS live @ Sugar Mountain

Wow. This band is incredible. Their presence on stage is so powerful, it's hard to imagine they are the humble dudes that they are off stage. All experienced musicians, SICKOIDS really embody good chemistry in their song writing and performances. Not to mention their CHRIST ON PARADE cover killed it! I have never seen Sugar Mountain have such a huge circle pit; it was so rad. Vince hits the drums so fucking hard and Eric tears the shit out of his bass. Not to mention Rob sounds like Jerry A—always a good thing. I feel lucky to have shared the stage (and cabs) with them that night.

Honorable mentions:

DIRTY WORK – demo tape, SADICOS – demo tape, DESTRUYE Y HUYE – demo tape, SICKOIDS – LP, BRAIN TUMORS – "Fuck You Forever" EP, CRIMSON SCARLET – "Sanctuary/Two Kinds of Red", HUNTING PARTY "Red Summer" EP, NEEDLES – "Desesperacion" EP, KREMLIN – "Will You Feed Me?" EP, INFERNOH – "War Tjard" LP

PACO MUS

2012 done. This is my Top Ten punk records released in 2012. I did not include anything I was involved in releasing. There is no order and definitely there could be a few more. Life is short so let's make this list short too. Peace.

TERCER MUNDO – "Depreción" EP (Cintas Pepe)
Gnarly two-piece, primitive non-fidelity Mexican band which made a sadly extremely relevant record. A product of a time and a place TERCER MUNDO tell you things the way they are. Not a nice record but a necessary one.

ORDEN MUNDIAL – 12" (Discos Basura)
Quite and abrasive relentless racket by this Mallorcan band. The singer sounds like a madman running away from the asylum while the rest of the band proceeds to annihilate said asylum. Ten tracks of non pose high energy radical hardcore without any production values. As close to ANTI-DOGMATIKSS and WRETCHED / NEGAZIONE singles period as it gets.

CRAZY SPIRIT – 12" (Toxic State)
It is hard to believe that CRAZY SPIRIT came to Europe in 2012 and inspired a lot of people to get their ass into gear, step their game up as far as working hard to make sure what you make is unique. But they did. Their output so far is pretty much flawless. Every record has an aesthetic, sound and general vibe that make then unmistakably theirs. While it is easy to just flip over how great their artwork is and how DIY their records look you must take your time to listen to the tunes, because the parallel underworld of their graphics is perfectly matched by their sound. Their unique beat and screechy vocals are just part of the whole CXS world, so are their minimalist guitar and groovy bass lines. Their songs are well written and are catchy in an ugly unsafe way. Probably the best punk record to come out in 2012.

LAS OTRAS – "Las Otras EP (Discos Sense Nom)
All female hardcore punk band based in BCN. No frills basic mid-tempo hardcore which sounds like a mix of OLHO SECO and BLITZ. Great lyrics, great attitude and overall great songs that stick up.

CROSTA — "Nus a la Gola" 12" (self-released)
A perfect mix of mid-tempo peace punk inspired tunes with personal anarchist lyrics sang in Catalan. A blend of A TOUCH OF HYSTERIA, the MOB, CRISIS with raging explosions of hardcore. All carefully packaged in a beautiful sleeve, including a printed inner sleeve and extra lyric sheet with translations to Spanish and English. Perhaps I am going crazy, but those things aren't the norm anymore.

HANK WOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS – "Go Home" 12" (Toxic State)
Yet another NYC record on this list. I basically don't rate much of what passes as punk in USA this days as in my opinion most of it is extremely safe paint by numbers crap with zero soul. But it was hard not to include HANK WOOD' and CXS on this list as I would lie if I say I've played both albums repeatedly since I got them. Good old Henry came out with the nastiest vocals I've ever heard in a garage record. You can sense how mad this guy is while his backing band destroy some tuneful numbers. A primitive assault of NY City-ness if such a thing is possible.

ABSURDO– "Tots Sants" EP (Discos Absurdos)
While the sound of ABSURDO's first single is far from perfect it has an aura of idealism that will always win me over. Not that far from OTAN's sound ABSURDO represents the perfect mix of activism and punk which has been lost as of late. This totally DIY record has a lot of time behind it and the tunes are all solid jams.

SECT – LP (Discos Enfermos)
Another Barcelona band made up of people from Venezuela and Poland. Extremely well executed peace punk with female vocals and memorable songs. It has been played to death at Mus HQ.

FRACASO – "Desafío Antiautoritario" 7" (self-released)
Venezuelan anarchist punk. DISORDER style hardcore with reverb drenched vocals which at times reminds me of INVASION. More idealistic punk that look at DESTRUCCION / OTAN for inspiration.

NO – 12" (Static Shock)
Probably Britain's hardest working band unleashed a monster of a record. Eight tracks of dissonant and aggressive hardcore played with conviction and trying to push the limits. When listening this record I usually dream of the studio collapsing or their gear giving up on them.

HECTOR CINTES PODRIDES

Hey! Aren't top tens the most boring thing in MRR*? Also, these guys have a horrible taste in horrible music, right? So do we! Last year Marat, Leri and me were kidding about sending our own lists, everyone should do that. Stop the columnist dictatorship! But, OK, surprisingly they've asked me to submit my top ten this time and errr... what could I say? Of course: "Yes sir, I will!" Is this incoherent? No way! Alright, I'll try to keep it short and not too boring and, anyway, you shouldn't care much. This is just my personal opinion. Those New York City kids are probably on a thousand other top tens and they fucking deserve it. WOOLF should also be or I'm gonna murder someone. However, I'd like to focus in maybe less known bands that speak in my own languages: Català and Spanish. The fact that I understand them better, that I know what they say and do is no bullshit, and that their music is outrageously good, put them in my favorites of 2012. Actually, my top ten wouldn't change much being less strict in my selection. In alphabetical order, ladies and gentlemen:*

ARREST – demo tape (Discos Enfermos)
This is streetpunk, that meaning four punks that spend their lives between the streets and the squats joined to form a band that talks about being harassed by the cops, not fitting in the system, not playing the rulers game and seeing clear when it comes to who their enemies are. It's great and anthemic and if you're not singing along you may be one of their enemies so beware. Oh man, look at their pictures on the insert!

UNA BÈSTIA INCONTROLABLE – demo tape (self-released)
We are buried in the cities and we miss Nature. We don't know Her enough, we fear Her but still we love Her. We hope for Her to destroy all civilization but us. These are hardcore chants praying Earth powers to get revenge soon. Or am I crazy?

CISMA – "Imágenes Podridas" demo tape (Alta Intensidaz)
These anarchists show all of us that no matter what obstacles we find in our way or how much shit we get from government, capitalism, religion or whatever, punk is gonna last until they are dead or ruins. When Santi shouts to my face: "No! No voy a morir!" I just believe him. He is not gonna fucking die ever! From a small town in Canary Islands they keep hardcore furious, idealistic and true. Also, they make my day everytime I listen to this demo. And they've just recorded some more songs!

CROSTA — "Nus a la Gola" 12" (self-released)
A hypnotic bass, a sharp as a knife guitar and a monotonous drumming that break through your skull opening a path for those infectious voices. Time slows down, stops, you feel the need to shout but realize they are singing and your howl is theirs. At a time where meaningless post-post-punk-wave reigns everywhere this stands for honest ideals and no frills music. This is anarcho-punk, anarchist and punk, no bullshit. Thirty years ago CRASS would've wanted them on the label, but they would've released the record themselves anyway.

FRACASO – "Desafío Antiautoritario" 7" (self-released)
FRACASO would probably sound different in a welfare state country, but they come from Caracas (Venezuela) and get covered by dense layers of violence, misery and frustration. From the depth of that hole you can hear the echoes of a desperate raging voice. Simple and wild drumming, repetitive bass and maniac guitar for a spine-chilling protest raw punk.

ILEGAL – "El Aire Libre Fuera de los Dientes del Monstruo Tirano y Canibal" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

"Emigrando" is such a good song about the people forced to leave their land! The singer barely has enough air in his lungs to finish the lyrics but he pushes to say all the words because every fucking single letter is important. The whole album is a great politically charged hardcore example, but is it ok to go nuts or should I be debating the lyrics? I can't do both at the same time! "¿Cómo yo podría creer en democracia si a la mayoría no le importamos ni tú ni yo?"

ORDEN MUNDIAL – 12" (Discos Basura)

Anger! But good anger, you know what I mean? It makes you feel good. It's like the ANTI-CIMEX'S "Anarkist Attack". You play it and you feel the need to shout and laugh and destroy something. We play ORDEN MUNDIAL and get angry and happy at the same time because everything around is shit, but we are together and we are gonna burn all of it and live in anarchy and peace.

LAS OTRAS – "Las Otras" EP (Discos Sense Nom)

I love this record! These four rabid womyn are gonna kill anyone who get on their way to freedom. With the melodic crudity of Brazilian bands like LIXOMANIA or CÓLERA and the nerve of ÚLTIMO RESORTE, they blow everyone's mind. Me poor man, I feel lucky to listen to these five feminist hymns, but I want more more more! Please.

TERCER MUNDO – "Depreción" EP (Cintas Pepe)

If I had to choose only one record for 2012 it would be this one. The world needs it. It's terrifying and not in a funny way, at all. Words are too soft to describe it. It's so full of rage. Living in Mexico surrounded by violence and poverty related to drug capitalism and state corruption is so fucked up while the rest of the planet just turns their face down and snorts whatever they get. TERCER MUNDO don't shit-talk about a hypothetical nuclear war, but about a war going on right before them. "Mexico 2012 - 60,000 human beings dead. Now go party and score some cocaine." It's also an insanely good hardcore 7", but that's the less important question.

LA URSS – "Sonidos de un Derrumbe" LP (La Corporación)

I must admit I didn't like the previous records so much. I mean, they were ok and I understand people liking them. Just not for me. This one though it's a next level thing and you can hear how much work they put on the songs. So fucking good! Still some DEAD KENNEDYS touch and lots of Spanish punk from PARÁLISIS PERMANENTE to LARSEN or TNT, but now they got more personal and...good! Haha! I need to check a dictionary. The singer is a philosopher, right?

+

ESKORIA – "Discografía 1986-1987" 2xLP (Metadona)

Well, out of the top ten for obvious reasons I wanted to mention this reissue. ESKORIA were a forgotten band from Mallorca until Metadona records rescued their two demos in this superb release. I think ESKORBUTO, IV REICH and DESECHABLES are good references. They had some true hits and other not so memorable songs, but it's 33 tracks, so hey! Also, by their writings, fanzines and flyers you can tell they were really passionate even when the bloody heroin started killing them. You know what's funny? The voice reminds me to MUNDO MUERTO a lot.

AMELIA EAKINS

This was a solid year for demo cassettes and vinyl releases. Death to clones, up the punks.

WILD MOHICANS – "Police Violence/Drunk Alone" (self-released)

This Portland band will crawl in your guts like an infection and refuse to leave. With NEGATIVE APPROACH vocals and spot on desperate punk lyrics like, "I gotta kill my brain before I kill myself," WILD MOHICANS are here to stay. Take your favorite West Coast '80s hardcore band, the frustration behind daily existence, and the melodic, infectious but intelligent wit and hook of POISON IDEA and you get WILD MOHICANS. Nice CHAOTIC DISCHORD reference!

KOWARD – "Overbred" EP (Total Fucker)

Ugly, filthy punk from Boston. This EP contains their demo songs with the addition of "Overbred" and "Nightmare Man." KOWARD are haunting with the gruesome, cutthroat lyrics and violent sound projection. This is vile hate mosh hardcore punk.

OWL – "Gypsy River" LP (Magik Hermit / Lummox)

Oakland NWOHBM with crazy guitar solos and a vintage feel. OWL are in the same camp as LECHEROUS GAZE and other long hairs channeling the late '70s rocker frequency and doing it well.

WHO KILLED SPIKEY JACKET? – "Who Killed Spikey Jacket?" 12" MAXI-EP (Total Fucker)

Studded punx high on glue. This is a lifestyle band. Pogo or don't. Elmer's Rubber Cement is cheap and widely available. You know the high you are getting with Elmer's. It comes in a shatterproof plastic jar, which cuts down on glue accidents. These boys will huff whatever glue is available; without it, they would die. This is nine songs of sing-a-long pogo punk for fans of nineteen eighty glue and street punk. This LP captures all the WKSJ? classics with the addition of four more. Huff glue or die. Best pogo punk release of the year.

BRAIN KILLER – "War" EP (Framework / Vinyl Rites)

Their guitarist is a fan of studs and warm beer. Who knew these fuckers could put all fashion punks to shame with perfect execution. The last chapter of this band saw the addition of a second vocalist and they pulled it off. I cannot praise this band enough—all releases from the lathe 8" to this final EP were pure punk perfection.

UPSET – demo tape

Channeling the '90s with dual bass and that early EXTREME NOISE TERROR and DOOM sound. This is pure crust and it's good. Crust'll survive.

BELGRADO – "Panopticon/Vicious Circle" EP (La Vida es un Mus)

This is my top dark punk band for 2012. Between this EP and their live performances I witnessed, this band is solid through and through. BELGRADO is a powerful anarcho post-punk band based out of Barcelona. The echoing riffs will haunt your head for days and the vocals will infect your soul. (AE)

ELEGY – "Cemetery Earth" (Shadow of Fear)

I love MÖTÖRHEAD and I love DISCHARGE. So does Oakland's ELEGY, formerly DISSÖNANCE. This EP is the perfect combination of Cal-esque vocals, rocker guitar and steady drums. Best rocker punk since INEPSY.

MAUSER – "Isolation" LP (Vinyl Rites)

Who needs reissues and reunions when you have a solid modern day punk band like MAUSER? Their influences like FRAMTID shine through, but they have their own brand of pure eardrum ripping noisy and pogoable raw punk. I'm here on the West Coast waiting for the highly anticipated 2013 tour with FOLKEIIS from Japan. This was my number one release from the "raw punk" camp this year. No filler, just a pummeling noisy onslaught of punk devastation.

ZYANOSE – "Noise Philia チアノーゼ– 2005-2011" LP (540 / Todo Destruido)

This is a discography of one of the most cutting edge and excellent current noisy punk bands from Japan. ZYANOSE channel that CONFUSE spirit well while pushing current noise punk boundaries (take a listen to their recent *Isolation* EP). This is a very complete LP of all their recordings excluding their tracks off *Insane Noise Raid*. This is my number one noise punk release for 2012.

Honorable mention to the following international bands, labels, distros and venues who created, put out and supported DIY punk for another year in no disorder: PRIMITIVE PACT, MIDNITE BRAIN, CRIMSON SCARLET, PERMANENT RUIN, TOTAL WAR, FILTHCHAIN, PISSHEADS, FRACASO, CONTORT, NO SIR I WON'T, BLOODKROW BUTCHER, CIVIL WAR, BELIEVER/LAW, LOST TRIBE, ANASAZI, LIFEFORM, RATFACE, G.A.S.H., WHITE LINE FEVER, Sorry State Records, La Vida Es Un Mus, Alta Intensidaz Tapes, Total Fucker Records, The Broken Neck, ABC No Rio, Thrillhouse records, IFB records, Eat The Life records, Prank, Radiation records, Social Napalm and Punk & Destroy. R.I.P. Nick Poot.

TONY GUNNARSSON

1. **PEOPLE – "Authentic Oral Communication" CD (Feminist)**
Easily the best record of 2012 and one I have really played nonstop daily since it came out sometime after the summer. Oita, Kyushu, noise rockabilly punk of the SWANKYS and CUT school. Incredible record that is scheduled for vinyl release on Noisepunk records in England in 2013.

2. **CONTROL / STAGNATION – split EP (Hardcore Survives)**
Technically released in late December 2011, this is one of the best records of the last forever years. This is the first proper studio recording with CONTROL ever, or else in a long time, and their side blew me away. In fact, it's so intense and brutal that everything else pales in comparison. As a consequence, the will to play another record in 2012 was totally eliminated. I can't play any other hard fast and brutal punk recorded this side of 1983 any longer.

3. **STAGNATION – "Three Songs Cover Singles" EP (Hardcore Survives)**
One-sided ploy limited EP with three cover songs. These are both the best covers I have ever heard and the most original sound in contemporary hardcore. Have to be heard to understand!

4. **ISTERISMO – "Folia Verso l'Interno" 12" (La Vida es un Mus)**
Paco's on fire, this, obviously high ranker on any list for obvious reasons, as well as GLAM and ATENTADO LPs came at the tail-end of 2012, and all three releases have set a very high standard in hardcore.

5. **CRAZY SPIRIT – 12" (Toxic State)**
Listening to CRAZY SPIRIT in the count down to their London gig, being off my tit in front of them live and coming down the day after listening to the LP, which is darker and harder to get into than the demo and singles, but still fuckin great, all played a big part in my musical experiences of last year, hence position five on my list.

6. **INSTITUTION – "Domen Ar Satt" 12" (De:Nihil)**
No brainer. This goes up here with the penultimate HERÄTYS EP. Sverige mangel ei leiki.

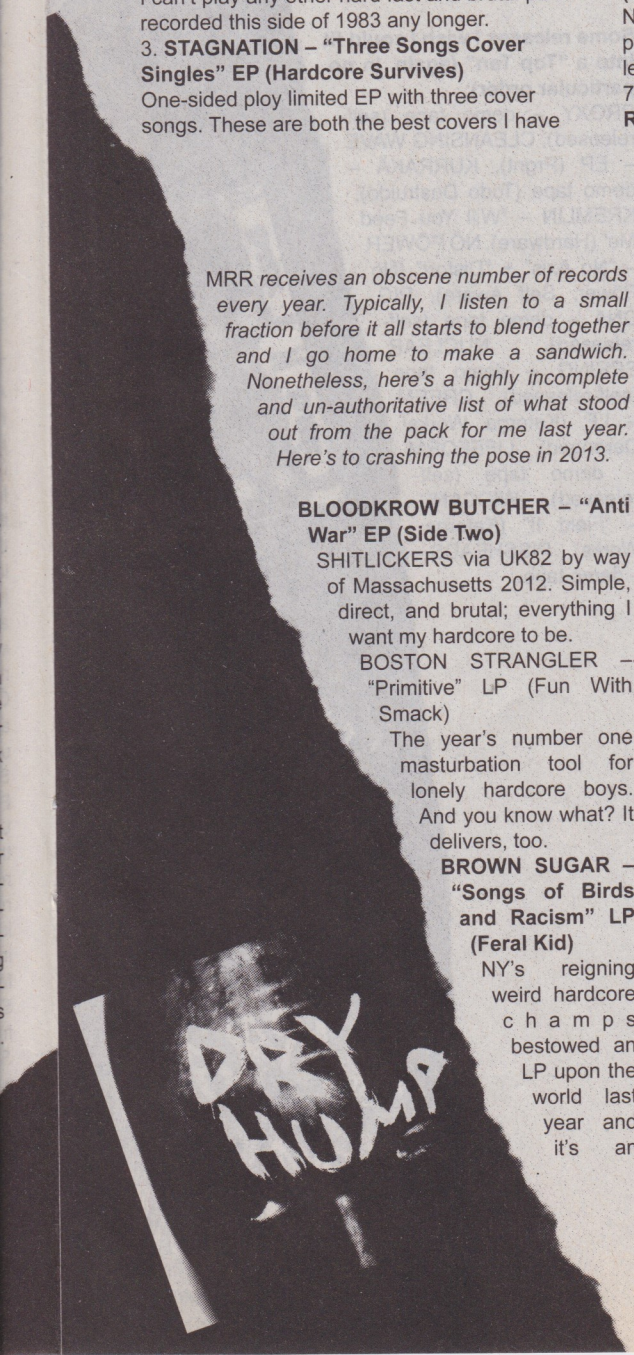
7. **ZYANOSE "Isolation" + "Insane Noise Raid" CDs (Nosenoise)**
I am huge fan of ZYANOSE. Everyone knows ZYANOSE.

8. **AOKIGAHARA / YDINASEETON PAHJOLA – split LP**
I interviewed the Finnish hardcore band YDINASEETON PAHJOLA, that mixes Finnish and Italian sounds to make aggressive desperate cries of late period capitalist existentialism, some time ago and was very gladly surprised when this split LP came out, with a complementary CD-R with their discography to date thrown in as good gesture.

9. **NITAD – "Rastlös Och Vild" LP (Mourningwood)**
This is ugly hardcore by ugly men. To paraphrase my good friend Marko Gillingsmark, "I am ugly and I like it."

10. **YDINTUHO / KYLMÄ SOTA – split EP (Psychedelica)**
My favorite band KYLMÄ SOTA toured the UK last year and in a tiny pub they destroyed all hope for the continued existence of the current ruling elites of this world. I am hoping to bring them over again, perhaps with KUOLEMA, this year. Ski to hell!

JASON HALAL



MRR *receives an obscene number of records every year. Typically, I listen to a small fraction before it all starts to blend together and I go home to make a sandwich. Nonetheless, here's a highly incomplete and un-authoritative list of what stood out from the pack for me last year. Here's to crashing the pose in 2013.*

BLOODKROW BUTCHER – "Anti War" EP (Side Two)
SHITLICKERS via UK82 by way of Massachusetts 2012. Simple, direct, and brutal; everything I want my hardcore to be.

BOSTON STRANGLER – "Primitive" LP (Fun With Smack)
The year's number one masturbation tool for lonely hardcore boys. And you know what? It delivers, too.

BROWN SUGAR – "Songs of Birds and Racism" LP (Feral Kid)
NY's reigning weird hardcore champs bestowed an LP upon the world last year and it's an absolute gem. Endlessly crazy, catchy, and creative, this was maybe my favorite release of them all. Highest recommendation.

CRIATURAS – "Oscuridad Eterna" LP (Lengua Armada)
These Texans really did a number on me with this LP. The deadly female vocals, wall to wall guitar solos, and a tight-as-can-be rhythm section push this fucker over the top. I don't even know what else to say, this just rages so incredibly hard.

DRY HUMP – "Fist Your Heroes" EP
Yet another exercise in depravity from these Massachusetts gentlemen that toggles between mid-paced early 80's hardcore and dirgey, sleazy, and supremely catchy noise rock. A no brainer for sexual deviants and fans of stupid mutant music.

MARSHSTEPPER – tape (Chondritic Sound)
Tense, drug-induced industrial from these Arizona nomads. I haven't a clue what's happening in DIY noise circles, but thankfully this tape (featuring a member of AVON LADIES and TEMPE SS for you hardcore nerds) made it's way into my hands. Expect great things from them and the rest of the Ascetic House camp in 2013.

ROYAL HEADACHE – LP (What's Your Rupture)
Technically, this came out last year but I didn't do a top ten so here we are with the 2012 U.S. pressing. Absolute, stone cold, pop-garage-punk perfection. Yes, Shogun is a white guy from Australia. But damn that boy's got soul.

STAB – "Nation Rising" EP (Quality Control HQ)
It's been a long time since the glory days of UK hardcore, but fortunately there are still a few young'uns keeping the flame of RIPCORD and crew alive. This EP slays in the finest tradition while taking it into newly uncompromising territory. Methinks the late, great John Peel would be proud.

STRIPMINES – "Crimes of Dispassion" LP (Sorry State)
Possibly the most all-around punishing experience of the year (though I do wish it was a bit under-produced). Raleigh, North Carolina is thee most underrated scene in the country and this here is one of it's shining moments.

WHATEVER BRAINS – LP (Sorry State)
I saw one of these guys wearing a BLUE OYSTER CULT backpatch on tour, which somehow makes perfect sense. Mad scientist punk and pop wrapped up into one sprawling and seamless package. A lot of bands these days crave the twisted freak label. Here's the real deal.

HONORABLE MENTIONS: BRAIN SLUG – "Distort New York" EP, BRAIN KILLER – "War" EP, CRIMSON SCARLETT – "Sanctuary" 7", DESTRUCTION UNIT, DOUBLE NEGATIVE – "Hardcore Confusion" Vols 3 & 4, EFFLUXUS – "Life Destruktion" LP, FORWARD – "War Nuke and Death Sentence" LP, GIVE "Petal Pushing" 7", HUNTED DOWN – "Life's Womb" EP, IMPALERS – EP, JOINT DAMAGE "Strike Gently" LP, KOWARD "Overbred" EP, KREMLIN "Will You Feed Me?" EP, LAST CHAOS "Kill Dick Control" EP, SATAN'S SATYRS "Wild Beyond Belief" LP, SICKOIDS – LP, S.H.I.T. demo, STOIC VIOLENCE – LP, WICCANS "Field II" LP

Choice reissues: THE CHOSEN FEW – "The Joke's On Us" EP, DISASTER – "War Cry "LP, VARUKERS "Another Religion, Another War" MLP

BIDI CHOUDHURY

2012 was a really challenging year, not only for myself but for many friends of the punk persuasion. Between authorities squashing punk/DIY spaces, unforeseen natural disasters, scenes splitting and picking sides over this and that, punk in Northeastearn USA has been especially tense. Sometimes it's difficult to remember that so many rad things have come of punk this past year, but looking at the musical output of 2012 alone is a great reminder that there's still so much to be psyched on. If I may say so, 2013's looking even sicker.

TOP PUNK AND HARDCORE RELEASES FOR 2012 (in no particular order):

SICKOIDS – LP (Residue)
SICKOIDS's debut LP brings not one moment of disappointment. Originally from Philly, these dudes just moved to the west coast, and I have to admit I am seriously bummed because that means my east coast self won't get to see them perform again over here for a while. This LP gives us some seriously intense Midwestern USHC spliced with dark, sophisticated melodies and guitar licks DIE KREUZEN would undoubtedly be proud of. Certain tracks like "Hope Subsides" and "King of the Dirt Mound" have almost an early '80s Portland punk vibe to them too. This record's probably spent the most time on my turntable this year, and I have a feeling I'll need to keep it nearby for years to come.

S.H.I.T. – demo tape (Self-released)
MAN, TORONTO! Do you even know what you have here? S.H.I.T. have blasted their way inside my brain, and I never want to shake them out. The single chord strums at the beginning of the opening track is nothing less than utterly sinister, and while you know something big is about to happen you're still not prepared for what comes next (the constant haunting guitar feedback definitely helps to add to that effect). Ryan's unhinged vocals are the perfect amount of reverb to wrap around your head and slam you in the face and leave you wanting more. There's a certain maniacal character to all of these tracks, and each song is structured and executed with intense perfection. This is no-nonsense, perverse hardcore at its finest.

SHOXX – demo tape (self-released)
NYC freak juice straight from the gutter. Shoxx is members of POLLUTION, BATTLETORN and NOMOS, and their collective contributions result in a brilliant cacophony of sound. Nate's vocals are almost in the style of CROW, while the instrumentation is rather complex and even downright sludgy at times. Up the weirdo punk freax. Excited for what's to come next.

KOWARD – "Overbred" EP (Total Fucker)
This record blends perfect amounts of Scandicore with Boston '82. I guess with members of SCAPEGOAT, WHO KILLED SPIKEY JACKET?, and TEROKAL, that only makes sense. Highlight: "Sick of Dope" is a monster stomp jam. If you don't mosh while listening to this, even while alone in your bedroom, I'm pretty sure you're dead inside.

FRACASO – "Desafío Antiautoritario" 7" (self-released)
Venezuelan raw anarchist punx attack! I was blown away when I first heard the demo that was released via CV recs and have been looking forward to this 7" ever since. Blasting D-beats with sheer brutality, FRACASO are punker than punk. The vocals are seething with anger and frustration, and there's no fronting about it. FRACASO don't need to announce that they are the real deal; they just are. Also, sick artwork by Teodoro Hernandez (guitarist of FIRMEZA 10, also runs tape label Alta Intensidaz).

CONFINES – "Some Sick Joke" EP (Side Two / Labor Of Love)
Boston HC, coming from members of BRAIN KILLER, CUT THE SHIT, FAILURES, SOCIAL CIRCKLE and BLANK STARE. The title track is a cry of disgust, a slow-tempo'd hardcore piss on life and devastation. It's very clear from that start that this is *not* apathetic music. These are sheer cries of rage articulated into three brutal tracks that end all too quickly. Fuck yes, CONFINES. Please don't make us wait two more years for you to put out another 7".

DHK – "Primera Maketa" EP (Odio Los Discos)
When my buddy Golnar told me I needed to hear this sick-as-death raw band from Peru, I had a feeling I'd be in for a treat (as is the case with pretty much all of her recommendations), but I was not prepared for the total aural assault that was DHK. *Primera Maketa* is the vinyl follow up to the *Odio Tu Kumbia Moderna* tape, and it's not any less mind-blowing than said tape — and that's saying a lot. It definitely channels that same MG15 vibe but with way more uncompromising, blown-out vocals, violent guitar riffs, and a D-beat that just won't quit. Something tells me these dudes could chug castor oil without blinking an eye.

BRAIN KILLER – "War" EP (Framework / Vinyl Rites)
Supposedly last release we'll see from Brain Killer! Damn. At least they went out with a killer EP (and members are working on other projects). The addition of Dan's vocals make tracks like "Controlled Reality" all the more furious and scathing. Six tracks of nonstop fist-pumping anarcho-centric hardcore. Going to miss this band.

BIRTH DEFORMITIES – "Suburbanized" 10" (Cowabunga)
Classic yet totally demented Midwestern '80s style hardcore right here. Coming from some of the same dudes that brought you CÜLO, this LP is a nonstop rollercoaster of hate. "Feel Like Shit" is such an anthem for all of us cretins that woke up on the wrong side of LIFE.

DIRTY WORK – demo tape (self-released)
I have to admit, the image of highly contrasted leather gloves, studs, and the flesh of a wrist-turned-ashtray on the cover of this demo is what first attracted me to this release. What an awesome surprise it was to find that this tape itself totally rips too. These Kansas City gents play straightforward, traditional '80s USHC with pride and precision. Imagine this tape blasting in a Midwestern basement in the '80s, and a gaggle of sweaty punx are slammin' around while Pig Champion nods along approvingly somewhere in the background with sandwich in hand. Damn nasty and damn good. What else could you ask for?

Some releases I wish I could fit into a "Top Ten" (again, in no particular order):
PROXY – demo tape (self-released), CLEANSING WAVE – EP (Prgnt), KURRAKÄ – demo tape (Todo Destruido), KREMLIN – "Will You Feed Me" (Hardware), NÖ PÖWER – "No Axis" + "Distort" (Nö Pöwer, Self Aware), PIG DNA – demo tape (self-released), NUCLEAR SPRING – demo tape (self-released), CREEM – LP (Katorga Works/ Deranged), LIFEFORM – demo tape (self-released), WICCANS – "Field II" (Katorga Works), PISSHEADS – demo tape.

Anti 000 anti-system lp no laughing matter
Anti 001 antisect lp live in leeds 1986 most of the 2nd lp live
Anti 002 antisect lp 82 demo/live 82 all unreleased songs
Anti 003 pink turds in space - complete part 1 lp demo 86/87 ,session 91/live
Anti 004 anti-system 7inch defence of the realm
Anti 005 antisystem cd complete discog w/44 pages 75 mins
Anti 006 defects lp demo 1979 1st 7inch ,live 1980 and cd w/82 live gig
Anti 007 antisect 7 inch out of the void
Anti 008 anti-system lp a look at life w/demo & comp songs w/44 page booklet
Anti 009 doom lp doomed from the start lp/cd 87/88 demos cd
Anti 010 v/a - 'society best' - sampler lp/cd cheap price
Anti 011 discharge lp/cd 1977 demo - 1st 200 coloured
Anti 013 pink turds in space cd all records demos live 74 mins w/24 page booklet
Anti 014 pink turds In space - complete part 2 lp ,greatest shits and sedition split
Anti 016 alternative LP/CD 1982 demos cd with live 83 gig.coloured/black
Anti 017 defects lp defective breakdown on picture disc ltd 500
Anti 018 impact lp (wales) 80-84 demos
Anti 019 varukers lp/cd 80-85 rare and unreleased 1st 200 purple.cd with live 86 gig
Anti 020 v/a - wales comp lp / 2 x cd , 'bullsheep detector vo1 1980-84'

Anti 021 lost cherrees 7inch 'hung drawn and quartered' ltd to 1000
Anti 022 GBH 2xlp 'punk junkies' 1st time on vinyl
Anti 023 hellkrusher / bulletridden , split 7inch
Anti 024 lost cherrees lp 'the singles 82-85
Anti 025 doom Lp /cd world of shit. From 2001 their last Lp back at last, cd with live gig 2012
Anti 026 varukers 2 x cd 84-2000 4 albums and 2,7inchs on 2 CDs

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ASSHOLEPARADE
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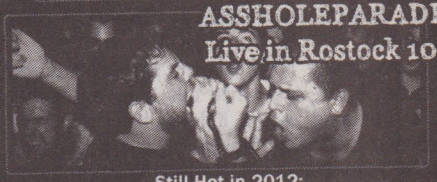

Still Hot in 2012:
Manchild #6 book, Mehkago NT LP, TFD flexi, Osk CD, Rape Revenge EP, Curmudgeon EP, DOC EP, ACxDC 2xEP

Late 2012/Early 2013 Releases:
The Kill LP, The Kill/White Eyes 5", Abuse. EP, TLAL Vol. II

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NUCLEAR SANTA CLAUST

ORDER OF THE NEW AGE

Don Giovanni Records

ROB TYERS

[of kickass UK zine Limited Readership*!!! — Mariam]*
I've gone for a list of ten records overall. There's been plenty of quality reissues (TRONICS, FEEDTIME, DEAD C et al), but I'm sticking by the tyranny of The New.

KREMLIN – "Will You Feed Me?" EP (Hardware)
7" of the year. Toronto's KREMLIN prove that hardcore is alive and well in the real North America, helping to sooth the disappointment of all the exciting Canadian bands from the early '00s either breaking up or starting to make music that appeals to *assholes only*. Hardcore with a classic heredity (BATTALION OF SAINTS, *Victim In Pain* etc), "Forced March" especially is a stomper for the ages, a mix-tape staple for years to come.

NASA SPACE UNIVERSE – "Tour 12" (self-released)
Bold statement: NSU are my favourite current hardcore band. And while this is probably their most "produced" record, it doesn't lack any of the character or energy they've always possessed. It's still essential acid-damaged *punk* borne from a wide range of influences. There is a stronger metal influence here than before (SARCOFAGO not SOULFLY), but that should only bother the musical-apartheid purists. The opener even has a bass riff that reminds me of HELMET, but in the best possible way (*Strap It On* still rules, fuck you).

CRAZY SPIRIT – 12" (Toxic State)
This disappointed plenty of volk, but not me. Hearing these songs live made them click, and there are plenty of catchy high energy hardcore hits on here. It just doesn't have the manipulated noisy production of the demo or 7-inches. This basically sounds like they do live, with raspy vocals and single-note guitar runs guiding the chaos. Beyond the USHC ingredients, I think there's a pretty strong Finnish influence at play here too (RATTUS/APPENDIX). The whole thing just *works*, with solid artwork ta boot (created by the entire band).

UNA BESTIA INCONTROLABLE – demo tape (self-released)
If the GLAM 12" was out by now it would have been on this list. Instead we've got this demo featuring their singer and drummer, plus the guitarist from DESTINO FINAL. It sounds like a mixture of the two but with more of the "punk primitivism" members have explored elsewhere (Dani is in ATENTADO, who also did a great 12" this year). It also employs "non-hardcore" influences, with feedback loops and vocal distortions creating almost industrial interludes. This worked well when I saw them live, as much THROBBING GRISTLE as DISCHARGE. With headlines about the far-right gaining ground in Spain, we can only hope the frustration of the young is channeled into creating hardcore bands instead (one new band per fortnight will do). Hardcore Nación Número Uno.

MANIC – EP (Scavenger of Death)
All I know about Atlanta is Ted Turner and NEON CHRIST. Well now I can add MANIC to the list, a band that takes more than a little from its local predecessors (NEON CHRIST not Turner, unless one of the members is his illegitimate offspring). This 7" is a sleeper release of flailing hardcore energy, as direct as it is slightly warped by "off-trend" stylistic choices. In places it reminds me of BORN AGAINST at their most hardcore, or other '90s bands like FESTERING RINYANYONS. I'd love to see them live.

WALLS – "The Future is Wide Open" LP (Iron Lung)
The curtain calls for WALLS. Out of all the modern hardcore bands mining the '90s "noise rock" caverns, WALLS were one of the best. By this point they'd shed the off-putting NEUROSIS vibes of the first album, really honing what they do. It retains central aspects of COLD SWEAT (probably my favourite hardcore band of the '00s) such as Nick Turner's dissonant guitar style, but it also has its own character, drawn from DIE KREUZEN, SWANS, CHERUBS and other musical touchstones. Power Music.

SWEET TOOTH – "Blister Music" flexi (Cowabunga)
Late entry. I've been thinking about how so much modern hardcore that still "works" for me is made by older folks, while the young are busy listening to music genres with names I don't understand (what the fuck is *nightbus*?). SWEET TOOTH bucks the trend. These Midwestern children (no offense, but they look super young on the insert) provide a few minutes of fast hardcore (not "fastcore") that could be compared to a million bands, but which has enough of its own power and urgency to appeal. When everyone else is trying to create a "groove" SWEET TOOTH just blast and rage. Feral music by feral children.

SUDOR – "Cruces de Cables" EP (Solo Para Punks / Beat Generation)
Another Spanish smasher, I had to include SUDOR because they were easily one of the best bands I saw live in 2012. Out of all their records I think this best captures their live sound, a blistering mix of DISCHARGE, "trad" Spanish hardcore (IV REICH) and the manic energy of, say, early JERRY'S KIDS. And like KREMLIN they prove that a three-piece hardcore band can be more powerful than four or more.

HANK WOOD & THE HAMMERHEADS – "Go Home" 12" (Toxic State)
Beyond all the poultry controversy, HANK WOOD disrupted the bad PR by releasing a great fucking record. It essentially sounds like *Horror Stories*-era DWARVES mixed with the thuggier end of early punk (just before the tipping point that gave us hardcore). Organ-driven and catchier than it has any right to be, this thing actually has swing, while remaining aurally "violent." While a zillion bands are still recording tepid "garage" records that emulate the tinny aesthetics of the '90s revival, HANK WOOD prove there's still life left in the style.

CONFRONT – "The Curtain of an Intense Attack" EP (Not Very Nice / General Speech)
My favourite Japanese record of the year, without any hint of blown out crust or "noise punk." CONFRONT basically sound like the late '80s/'90s Japanese bands who don't have wide appeal but endure to those who know; burly shit like INSANE YOUTH, RAISE CAIN and FINAL COUNT. Four songs that pummel the listener into their carpeted floors. While no song is as good as "Mean Streak" by the Clevo same-named, this is still rock solid *hard*core.

KENNY KAOS

Here it is, the Top Ten of 2012. Some would have you believe that this is the Pop Punk perspective. While there is some truth in that, I would tell you that it goes at least a little beyond that. Just check the last entry, if you don't believe me. As has become the tradition in the last few years, my year-end top ten begins with a video. This year, there were a number of them that were worthy, so the decision was perhaps a little tougher than in previous years.

And the grammy for the best punk video of the year goes to...
THE PHARMACY for their "Dig Your Grave" video (Kind Turkey). I can tell you that they won this for a couple of reasons. The first reason is that the song is Top 10 worthy. The second reason is that the video tells a story. It's fine for bands to create videos that involve them performing the song, but a solid video generally goes beyond that. The song itself has a sort of creepiness about it and the video builds on that. Of course, the title of the song "Dig Your Grave" lends itself to creepiness.
Honorable mention goes to **Johnny III Band** for their "Where Do You Live" video and to the HUSSY for their video to "Stab Me". Finally, I should mention that if I had discovered the video the GOOCH PALMS made for their song "La Cucaracha" back in 2011, which would have made last year's list *for sure*.

And now, the nine records that round out the Best of 2012, in no particular order:
MAXINES – "Drugstore" EP (K)
It was a year of ups and downs for me and the MAXINES. I discovered the band, fell in love with the band and then found out the band is taking an indefinite hiatus, all in 2012. Drummer Kelly has decided that Southeast Asia seems like a pretty good alternative to Olympia, Washington. It was a whirlwind romance, but man, it was good while

it lasted. If you like infectious, trashy pop music that is both melodic and stilted you need to look find both of the 7" records they put out. In addition to this one here, there is the *Queer Mods* 7" on La-Ti-Da. Didn't I just tell you to go out and find both of them?

BIG EYES – "Back from the Moon/I Don't Care about Friday Night" (Grave Mistake)

I could listen to this song over and over again. In fact, I've done that on a number of occasions. In fact, almost every time I listen to it, I find myself going back for seconds and thirds. This is female fronted melodic punk that has a kind of real "heavy" sound. I know that's kind of a lame description, but it'll make sense if you listen to the record. There's a great sense of urgency and the record has a certain FASTBACKS quality to it. I can't help but think that there is another resemblance in there that I can't quite identify, particularly with the title track. Every time I listen to the record, I feel like this other reference is on the tip of my tongue, but I just can't identify it. If you know, please tell me. Seriously, it's driving me fucking nuts. PEGBOY? Is that it? No, I don't think so.

GENTLEMAN JESSE – "Leaving Atlanta" LP (Douchemaster)

GENTLEMAN JESSE is no stranger to this list. I imagine that as long as he keeps putting records out, I'll find a spot for him here. This is power pop straight out of 1978. It's THE UNDERTONES all over again. It's catchy rock songs that are rock first and punk or something else second. You can tap your feet, you can sing along. You can bounce your head. There is also a certain genuine quality that the Gentleman gives off. In any event, this is top-notch power pop, if you're interested. Amazingly, this somehow escaped by monthly Top 10 in the April, 2012 issue. I blame me.

ARTHUR PYM AND THE GORDONS – "Side Mirror of My Mind/Just a Rapper's Delight" (Close Up / Sacem)

This isn't the first time that a band name was clever enough to go completely over my head. Whatever. All cleverness aside, this is a kick ass record. Sure it's catchy and all that, but it's also got this kind of slightly disjointed quality that keeps it interesting. It reminds me, at different times, of the FALL, ROBYN HITCHCOCK, O LEVEL, even early BUZZCOCKS. That it's French might have been a surprise 15 years ago. Not any more.

THE HUSSY – "Stab Me" EP (Eradicator)

This is another band that has a history of making my year-end list. If you're not familiar with this two-piece, you should be. From the great state of Wisconsin, these guys belt out trashy, but very melodic and catchy punk that is heavy on the fuzz and distortion. The melodies on this one are almost criminal. They also put out an LP this year, *Weed Seizure* on Tic Tac Totally, which could also have made my list. You know me, when given an option to pick the 7", I'll always do that.

YES MISTRESS – "Gunna Get Arrested/Self-Inflicted" (No Front Teeth)

I said from the beginning that this was Best of 2012 material. Honestly, the music itself isn't anything earth shattering in terms of sound or style. It's punk rock that sounds like it came from 1977. It's the kind of thing that bands try to pull off all the time. The difference for me is that these guys actually pull it off. They've got the sound and the attitude and, possibly most important of all, they've got a sense of urgency that, for this style of music in particular, can either make or break a record. Oh, and this really had nothing to do with the record making it on this list, but I've got to give them credit for great packaging. There is a "regular" version and a more limited version. Both are nicely done. If you're a "collector", get the fancy one with police tape and all. If you just like music, get the regular one.

DIRTY CUPCAKES – "I Want It" EP (Fuzz City)

The video for this song made my Top 2011 list. Fortunately for the band, the video preceded the record. I know it's sort of double-dipping, but I find both the song and the band so adorable that I can't help but include the record on this year's list. It's sweet, but not sticky-sweet, female fronted pop punk that's delivered at a pretty decent clip, like pop punk on speed. But it's also got enough energy that I don't get overwhelmed (or underwhelmed) by how pleasant it is. Seriously, one of the downfalls of most pop punk is that it doesn't have enough guts. This has guts.

GOOCH PALMS – "R U 4 Sirius" EP (Anti-Fade)

The third two-piece to make my list, Australia's GOOCH PALMS are self-described purveyors of shit pop. I've never heard of shit pop before and this might not sound like much of a compliment, but I think if you listened to this record and somebody told you it was shit pop, you'd probably think that was a pretty good description. Think DEVO. Now take away a few of the instruments and the fancy production studios. Now imagine that DEVO was born in Australia instead of Ohio. And now imagine that I haven't done them justice at all. Seriously, since discovering this band a few months back, I just can't get enough of them. More shit pop, please. (And by the way, it really does have an Australian quality to it.)

NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS – "Ocean Beach Party / Shark Beach" (Falsified)

Just to prove I'm not a complete pussy, I'm including this effort from NEIGHBORHOOD BRATS. I'm actually also including it because it's deserving. It's fast, it's loud, it's driving, it's chaotic and it's fun. I suppose you would call this hardcore. That's what I'm going to call it. Incidentally, I was alarmed to hear that this San Francisco band had broken up. In fact, they just decided to move to Southern California. While that's kind of a stupid move, it's better than them having broken up.

There you have it, the Top Ten of 2012. I should mention that I found this year a little more difficult to shave this down to ten selections. The following are just a handful of the bands that put out music that was Top Ten of 2012 quality: ALICJA POP, POPPETS, MEAN JEANS, COLD WARPS, HIGH TENSION WIRES, MISSING MONUMENTS, ENGLISH SINGLES and HEAD ON ELECTRIC.

ARTO HIETIKKO
TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO

Arto Hietikko of *Toinen Vaihtoehto* zine, Finland.

LPs, 12"s and 10"s

ANTIMOB – LP (Εξωτικός Παροξυσμός)

I'm out of words. That's how good this is. They are taking influences from here and there but yet manage to sound like no other band. It's so refreshing to hear a band like this. Top notch hardcore, there's no doubt about it. I'm listening to this every fucking day.

ISTERISMO – "Folia Verso l'Interno" 12" (La Vida es un Mus)

What a blast!! At first listening it sounded like there was a mountain of dust in my record needle, but then suddenly it all hit me so hard that there was no coming back. Sometimes I'm almost getting tired of this noisecore trend, but ISTERISMO is something special. It's noise, that's right, but it is so well done. Everything here is perfect, even the production that makes your loudspeakers sound like they are broken. I enjoy this record very much. It feeds my soul.

CRAZY SPIRIT – 12" (Toxic State)

Yes, they have been hyped for quite a long time now, but for a reason. I simply love CRAZY SPRIT. This record is not as chaotic as their previous ones, but all their trade elements are present. Twisted punk with a vocalist who sounds like a cross between Donald Duck and Nick Blinko. Definitely one of the most original punk bands of the past years. Exciting, different, and adorable.

BAD JESUS EXPERIENCE – "II" 10" (Tuska & Ahdistus / Grey Inferno / Kämäset Levyt / Nunchakupunk)

I guess I'm a bit unqualified to put this one on my top 10 list, as I'm one of the releasers, but—honestly—this is one of the best hardcore releases of 2012. Fast, intense, in-your-face hardcore with extremely angry female vocals. I'm out of breath when I'm just listening to this. Extremely good lyrics (in Finnish) hit the last nail in the coffin. Furious.

CROSS STITCHED EYES – "Decomposition" LP (Alternative Tentacles)

Less RUDIMERNTARY PENI influenced than their first LP, and a bit more KILLING JOKE and post punk influences this time. And, of course, great songs. Especially after hearing these songs live when CSE toured in Finland this album made an even bigger impact on me.

MAAILMANLOPPU – "Ja historia kiertää kehää..." LP (Kämäset Levyt / Paha Tukka Elämä)

After a split tape with ARMLESS CHILDREN, what a terrific debut from MAAILMANLOPPU. Taking the spirit of the Finnish '80s HC into 2012. Fast, tight and full of enthusiasm. One of the records that instantly came to my mind when I started to think of top 10 LPs of 2012. Ummm—it's hard to write because I'm constantly drumming on my table while I'm listening to this 12".

NO STATIK – "Everywhere You Aren't Looking" LP (Prank)

I really love this band, actually so much that I like

their experimental sides, too. Harsh vocals, fast hardcore. Despair in the air. Crushing. I have to listen to this on a regular basis.

BUKKAKE BOYS – LP (Sorry State) / STRIPMINES – "Crimes Of Dispassion" LP (Sorry State)

I'm cheating and putting these two Sorry State releases together. BUKKAKE BOYS have a stupid band name, but they really rip. Primitive, raw and angry. This is what good hardcore sounds like. I have listened to this record a lot. STRIPMINES sounds a bit more organized, but not a bit weaker, and they melt together old and new influences extremely well. A really powerful album.

ILEGAL – "El Aire Libre Fuera de los Dientes del Monstruo Tyrano y Canibal" LP (La Vida es un Mus)

A fine example of a good punk record, nothing more, nothing less. This is even much better than I expected it to be. Once again, using influences from the past but coming up with something new and different, that's something not all bands are capable of.

CROSTA – "Nus A La Gola" LP (self-released)

I'm cheating again, as this is number eleven on my list. I couldn't drop any record off the list, and I *had to* include this. CRISIS influenced, mid tempo anarcho punk. Post punkish melancholy, but also anger. I love it!

Bubbling under:

KIM PHUC – "Copsucker" LP (Iron Lung)

This came out at the end of 2011 so I didn't get it in my hands until 2012 and it may even be the record I have listened to the most last year, and I'm still not a bit tired of it.

INFERNÖH – "War Tjard" LP (D-takt & Råpunk)

Excellent crust från Sverige. Kicks ass. Need say no more.

PUNK LUREX – "Puolesta ja vastaan" LP (Kämäset Levyt)

A comeback with a new line-up, and with a bang: this is the best album they have ever done. Great songs, and melodies that make you sing along. I know loads of melodic punk bands that are hyped even though they are not capable of writing even half as good songs as Punk Lurex.

TRAGEDY – "Darker Days Ahead" LP (Tragedy)

Finally a new TRAGEDY album. At first I was disappointed, but after a few listens it really began to grow on me. Some epic moments here.

EPs and singles:

YDINTUHO / KYLMÄ SOTA – split EP (Psychedelica)

What a split. Kylmä Sota is combining highly distorted DISCLOSE sound with traditional Finnish hc and the result is bombarding. YDINTUHO uses the same ingredients but adds some crust into the soup.

LAS OTRAS – "Las Otras" EP (Discos Sense Nom)

The singer sounds almost like an angry ten-year-old fronting a hc punk band, which in my book means that it sounds really good. I'm hooked on this EP. Never thought it would be on my top ten list, but when I'm counting the times it has been spinning on my turntable…

SKIZOPHRENIA – "Don't Give Up!" EP (Hardcore Survives)

ZETU – "Ninja Attack!" EP (Hardcore Survives)

VENDETTA – "Fight" EP (Hardcore Survives)

Yes, I'm cheating, but I cannot decide which one of these is the best. There is a wave of new Japanese bands mixing punk rock with hc and it sounds great. I wonder if this will be the trend of 2013, after noisecore and post punk? If it is, I have nothing against it. All these three bands rule.

PERIKATO – "Jälkiteollinen painajainen" EP (Raakanaama)

Violent, chaotic hardcore. Noise and distortion. Take some Wretched, some Disclose, and some Siege, and put them together. Awesome

ANCIENT FILTH – "Too Young, Fuck Adults" EP (Shock to the System)

Speaking of hardcore bands that sound original—ANCIENT FILTH is a stimulating band both lyrically and musically. There's almost some GUYANA PUNCH LINE vibe here. Intense and pissed-off.

BELGRADO "Panopticon/Vicious Circle" (La Vida es un Mus)

Ok, this is actually more like a tour-release, or something to chew on while waiting for their forthcoming 2nd LP, but oh boy how good this sounds. Belgrado really knows how to make top notch post punk.

YDINPERHE – "Meistä ei tullut mitään" EP (self-released)

Hardcore fuckin' punk with a singer spitting out words with street credibility (once again I wish you could understand Finnish). Catchy songs, without losing the intensity.

DOUBLE NEGATIVE – "Hits" EP (Sorry State)

Sometimes when I hear a new DOUBLE NEGATIVE release I'm not sure at first if I like it. Every time I end up liking it, anyway. I also like how they challenge their listeners by stepping outside the traditional boundaries of hardcore.

LOS MONJO / ASPIRINA INFANTIL – split EP (Metadona)

LOS MONJO: great ESKORBUTO influenced punk rock from Mexico, young, loud and snotty. ASPIRINA INFANTIL: like a lost, old Spanish punk classic. A great punk split.

SOTATILA / THINK AGAIN – split EP (Hardcore Survives)

Absolutely blistering hardcore on both sides of the split. What else do I have to say?

Bubbling under:

SUDOR – "Cruce de Cables" EP (Beat Generation / Solo Para Punks)

Sudor is definitely one of my biggest current favorite bands and I love this EP, even though it's not quite as good as their earlier releases. It's almost in my top 10, or actually it should be, but—damn, making these lists is really frustrating…

NÜ-KLĒ-ər BLAST SUNTAN – "The Wheel of Fate is Turning" EP (SPHC)

I got this one a bit too late and haven't been able to listen to it enough to be sure if it would be a threat to some record on my top 10 list. Possibly it could be.

1981 – "Cycle/Symptom" (Profiteer)

Definitely one of the best anarcho punk bands of today. Take early CHUMBAWAMBA, ZOUNDS, etc. and add some catchy pop sensibility and stolen parts. Punk can be beautiful, too.

MATT BADENHOP

When I first started thinking about my top ten favorite releases of 2012, it seemed a too ambitious a list for me. I have this kind of irrational aversion to most bands/releases that get a lot of talk and hype, and often don't check 'em out til like 2 years later, if ever! You can call me a snob, but I typically look for a little more in a punk release than what other people are saying about it. I wanna feel something, like a personal connection, or be moved by it. Lots of records are "awesome," or "raging," or "killer" or whatever. But many of those, especially the blatantly contrived ones, just get filed and, for the most part, forgotten while we move on to the next batch of new stuff. So, without any further ado, a list of ten releases that left a lasting impression on me:

SICKOIDS – LP (Residue / Hardware)

This is definitely the #1 standout hardcore record to me this year. Genera-defying hardcore with the perfect balance of straightforward raging, innovative transitions and guitar/vocal melodies. The couple brilliant mid-paced melodic tracks, one on each side of the disc, really just tie it all together and make it a perfect LP. These sounds will surely stand the test of time in the way bands like ARTICLES OF FAITH, SO MUCH HATE, or UPRIGHT CITIZENS have.

KALTE LUST – "Somewhere Outside the Circle" LP (self-released)

Many of you probably never got to hear this French postpunk record—quite a shame because it's a masterpiece! They take the '80s goth/postpunk template and really produce something fresh and memorable with the eight dark movements on this LP. Some tracks are spacious and ghastly, droning on and repetitious in a delightfully rhythmic and haunting way. But tracks like the opener, "Once Bitten Twice Shy," or "Über Die Grenze" are beautiful postpunk gems that will hook you at every turn. The vocalist exhibits an undeniable Siouxie influence, but really belts it out in her own way. Fans of all forms of dark punk—if you haven't heard this yet, seriously track it down!

SADICOS – tape (Silenzio Statico)

Having already enjoyed all of the members' previous bands, I knew I would dig this tape. However, the urgent riffs and excellent songwriting

pushed this into regular rotation on my stereo and became my favorite release (well, currently) on the always dependable Silenzio Statico label roster.

ILEGAL – "El Aire Libre Fuera de los Dientes del Monstruo Tirano y Canibal" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

After a demo and a few great EPs, ILEGAL totally blew the roof off with this monster. My turntable was on fire for a week straight after obtaining this LP. I do like their previous efforts, but it seems like they saved up all the best guitar riffs and weird hooks for this one. There are some straight up danceable moments on here (note: said "danceable," not moshable), which is a pretty rare feeling for a full-on blistering hardcore band to create. Every time I play this I discover new cool shit going on. Amazing!

ANTIMOB – demo 2012 Cassette (Εξωτικός Παροξυσμός)

I have already spilled enough ink raving about this one, so I'll keep this short. Intense, passionate, brutal, dramatic and purely excellent hardcore from Greece. You probably won't be able to find this tape now, but they just released an LP with the same material, but re-recorded and yes I have heard it—and yes, it is fucking brilliant too.

REPLICA – demo (self-released cassette, flexi reissue by Radical Punks Never Die)

A perfect hardcore blend that doesn't ever seem to get tired. It seems like there's been a decent buzz about this band, but it's hard to tell if it's just local or if they have reached anxious ears worldwide. Well if they haven't, 2013 should be the year because REPLICA is always on fire. The five songs on this tape are perfect hardcore, exhibiting originality and with just the right touch of the classic Bay Area sound. Instant classic!

DRAPETOMANIA – EP (Silenzio Statico / Todo Destruido)

Another killer Statico Ponk release capturing everything that is punk. Gruff, raw, honest and fun hardcore punk from the backyards of LA. I cannot stress enough how inspiring that scene has been for me, and I'm always thrilled to hear more new shit from these folks. This 7" also gets my vote for "best looking record cover/layout" of the year! I pulled a DRAPETOMANIA t-shirt out of the free bin at the *MRR* compound—it was huge and white and totally swamped me, and had a big bulldog on it. I put it on one day and my girlfriend said it looked like a rap t-shirt (if you know me, you know this is not how I typically dress), but I said "fuck it" and wore it all day anyway. That's how much this band rules!

NEON PISS – LP (Deranged / Cut the Cord That...)

This one was a long time coming…That demo got a lot of play on my tape deck over the last couple of years, so I welcomed this LP with anxious open arms. Most punk bands just can't write such captivating tunes or develop such a unique melodic style the way NEON PISS has, and this LP is the ultimate testament to those qualities of this Bay Area quartet. Chances are if you live in North America or Europe and are tuned in to current punk shit, this band has blown your face off live and you bought this record. If not, pull your head outta your ass and get into it!

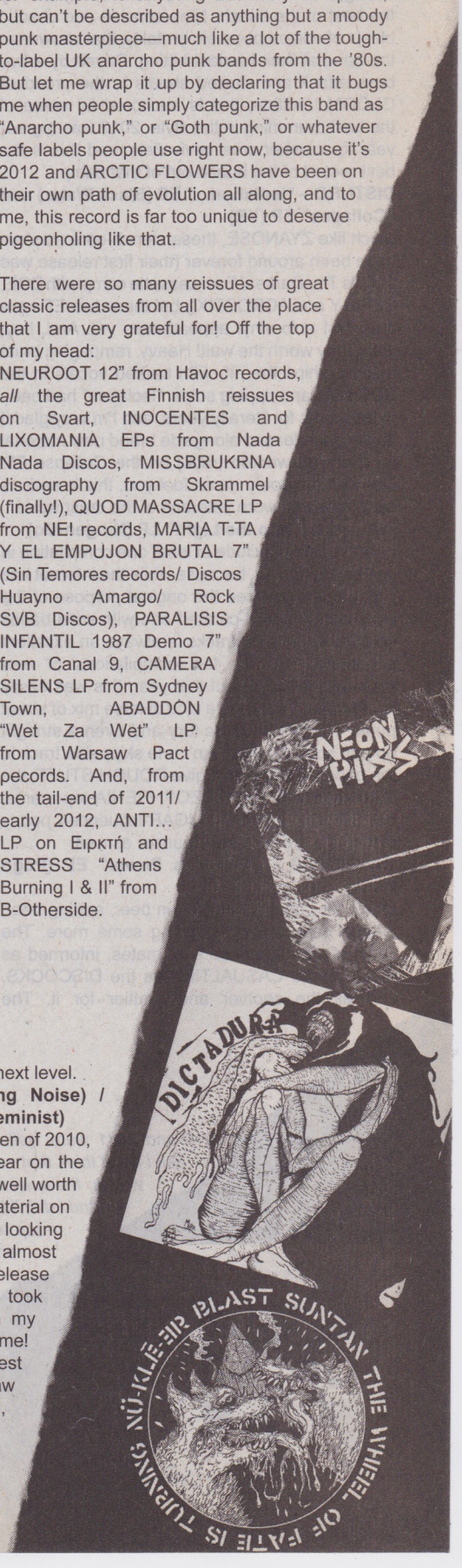
DICTADURA – "Bajo la Sombra del Miedo" LP (Stomp / No Thanks!!)

At the tail end of a long European tour, I had the privilege of seeing this Basque band half an hour or so outside of San Sebastian. I remember watching them and thinking that this was exactly the kind of snotty, aggressive hardcore punk I live for (I also remember us all sitting around a table for dinner and as everyone filled their plates with delicious vegan food, their drummer instead opted to turn his plate over and fix up a little line of speed!) I wondered if I would ever hear of them again, and a year and a half later I got in touch with their vocalist, only to be informed of the new DICTADURA LP! Pure aggressive punk with an incredible snotty vocal attack, a tight solid rhythm section reminding me of ECONOCHRIST, and flying guitar leads in all the right places—and a song about making punk mix tapes!! Top it off with excellent twisted artwork, and you've got a "top ten-er" for sure.

ARCTIC FLOWERS – Procession 12" EP (self-released)

I'm gonna be honest here—though I initially liked it, this one didn't fully grab me right away like their previous stuff did. And I am biased because they are dear friends of mine, and Stan's got a distinct way of writing melodic guitar stuff that I have always really connected with—so I guess this one's more of a personal thing. Anyway, after recently seeing them play again (their live energy is incredible), I spent a little more time with this and really grew to love it. The softer, mellower moments on this record really stand out for me because though they cut back on the aggression, it still retains the "punkness," if that makes any sense. "The Sleeping and the Dead," for example, is anything but lively or upbeat, but can't be described as anything but a moody punk masterpiece—much like a lot of the tough-to-label UK anarcho punk bands from the '80s. But let me wrap it up by declaring that it bugs me when people simply categorize this band as "Anarcho punk," or "Goth punk," or whatever safe labels people use right now, because it's 2012 and ARCTIC FLOWERS have been on their own path of evolution all along, and to me, this record is far too unique to deserve pigeonholing like that.

There were so many reissues of great classic releases from all over the place that I am very grateful for! Off the top of my head: NEUROOT 12" from Havoc records, *all* the great Finnish reissues on Svart, INOCENTES and LIXOMANIA EPs from Nada Nada Discos, MISSBRUKRNA discography from Skrammel (finally!), QUOD MASSACRE LP from NE! records, MARIA T-TA Y EL EMPUJON BRUTAL 7" (Sin Temores records/ Discos Huayno Amargo/ Rock SVB Discos), PARALISIS INFANTIL 1987 Demo 7" from Canal 9, CAMERA SILENS LP from Sydney Town, ABADDON "Wet Za Wet" LP from Warsaw Pact pecords. And, from the tail-end of 2011/ early 2012, ANTI… LP on Ειρκτή and STRESS "Athens Burning I & II" from B-Otherside.



ANDREW UNDERWOOD

CONTROL / STAGNATION – "Total Noise Core" split EP (Hardcore Survives)

The rest of this list is in no particular order, but this is absolutely my #1 favorite record of 2012 and possibly my favorite split EP of all time. An absolute classic, and a perfect pairing of bands that are philosophical soul mates while presenting very distinct musical visions. CONTROL are the shadowy heirs of the mighty CONFUSE, executing their vintage noize sound to perfection. They're one of the most inactive and mysterious bands in the world, but when they do emerge from obscurity the result is always something worth seeking out. On the flip, STAGNATION continue to dazzle with their completely unhinged take on modern noize-core. Given that this is a band good enough to produce the only covers-record worth listening to in a dog's age that's no surprise, but this is their best material to date. A swirling mess of buzzsaw riffs and unhinged vocals with a surprising backbone of solid melody under the fuzz and chaos. Quietly (well, actually they're pretty fucking loud) STAGNATION are doing more than any other band to move the noize world to the next level.

PEOPLE – "Fairy Tale" LP (Damaging Noise) / "Authentic Oral Communication" CD (Feminist)

PEOPLE's *Fairy Tale* demo was in my top ten of 2010, and the version that was released this year on the A-side of the *Fairy Tale* LP is hot stuff, and well worth a top 10 spot on its own, even if the live material on the flip proved to be a bit skimpy. I had been looking forward to new PEOPLE material (with the almost completely revamped lineup), and the release of the *Authentic Oral Communication* CD took me by surprise. Once I had the disc in my grubby paws it completely fucking floored me! This is 100% punk rock'n'roll of the highest order, dripping with snot, sweat and raw venom. Like the SWANKYS' ill-tempered, switchblade-toting little brother, this is the sound of a band completely uninterested in anything that doesn't involve sex, drugs or violence.

ZYANOSE – "Insane Noise Raid" CD (Noisenoise)
While ZYANOSE have been around for years, 2012 was undeniably their breakout year as they produced two CDs and EP, and made a successful US tour having finally established a stable lineup. All of their releases this year were strong, but *Insane Noise Raid* is for my money the best of the bunch. Nine concise and chaotic blasts of noize-not-music brutality, that showcase the band at their hardest-hitting. Driven by a two bass attack and slurred shouts in the proudest GLOOM tradition, this is anchored by some of the best drumming in the style. 2012 was a great year for crasher crust revivalists, and this is the best record of the bunch out of that camp.

DISTURD – "Isolation..." EP (Black Water) and "Collapse" EP (YR)
Much like ZYANOSE, these stench-core masters have been around forever (their first release was 2003's *The Darkest Four* cassette comp with ZOE, EFFIGY and ACROSTIX), but these two EPs are their first solo vinyl appearances yet. And, boy, were they worth the wait! Heavy, rampaging crust that worships the riff, with barked vocals in the SDS style and ripping solos. "Isolation" had been in the works for literally years, and I'm very glad it finally got released alongside brand new material (and one re-worked track) on the *Collapse* EP. Don't let the goofy name fool you, this is serious stuff from well-worn veterans of the crust world.

V/A – "Step Into the Light" LP (Ningen-Do)
I always like to include at least one compilation in a year-end top 10, because while the internet has pretty much usurped the original purpose of the punk comp, a well-curated one with solid bands contributing quality tracks is always an excellent experience. Of the few compilations of new material that came out this year, this was easily my favorite. Featuring a nice diverse mix of street punk, '77 snot, metallic fury and even a straight up pop song (!), there isn't one skippable track in the bunch. Personally I give ROUGH STUFF, the DRUNK BOI!S and SKIZOPHRENIA top marks, but STRANGENESS' SUGAR-influenced poppy closer is a great palate cleanser as well.

GAMEBOI!S – "Game Is Power" EP (Pogo Punx)
Music for pogoing, slipping in beer, spilling beer, getting back up and pogoing some more. The SAD BOYS' Japanese soul mates, informed as much by the CASUALTIES as the DISCOCKS, and all the snottier and brattier for it. The GAMEBOI!S theme song was stuck in my head more than any other song this year, up to and including "Gangnam Style". Sometimes dumb, fun straight-up punk is the best tonic in the world, and this is exactly that cranked up to 11. I will forever resent Connor Pogo for making an impossible-to-get CHAOS DESTROY record that fucks up my discography, but I have to give him a lot of credit for tracking down and issuing this gem.

DHK – "Primera Maketa" EP (Odio los Discos)
This shit is so raw it should birth its own genre: feral punk. Three wild kids from the streets playing unrelenting raw punk the way it was meant to be played. There are no elaborate postures or slavish recreations of other bands' works here, just rabid declarations of hate from some of the punkest dudes in the world. Amazingly, these guys are so overflowing with ideas that they've already spawned multiple side projects (the equally feral but slightly crustier RATAS RABIOSAS and the Spanish HC-tinged DISTEMPER) that are fantastic in their own right.

D-CLONE – "Creation & Destroy" LP (540 / Agipunk)
Even the most jaded punks I know, long since burned-out on the noizy hardcore/crasher trend have been praising this album, and rightly fucking so. D-CLONE are a truly amazing band, emerging from the ghetto of DISCLOSE worship they were pegged in to, come up with some of the most innovative, well-written and downright catchiest noizy D-beat ever written. Yeah, they've been around for quite a while, but these three dudes are seemingly forever young, and the energy and enthusiasm they pour into every track on this LP is nothing short of remarkable. They've been a mainstay on my yearly top 10 lists for years, and while I really honestly love every EP and split they've ever done, this is (thus far) their masterwork, a collection of new and re-imagined songs that absolutely defines this band, their aesthetic and their approach to noizy fucking hardcore. Ten years from now people will be tracking down copies of this record the way people are looking for original pressings of DISCLOSE's *Tragedy* or GLOOM's *Recommendation of Perdition* today.

VIOLENT PARTY / CHAOS DESTROY – split EP (CR)
Aaaahhhhhhhhhhh, rack and ruin, woe and tragedy! Why the fuck won't the punk scene see what's right the fuck under its collective nose? For fuck's sake, there are so many godawful to mediocre bands that get so much love today while these two bands (but especially CHAOS DESTROY) labor away in obscurity. Look...I realize CHAOS DESTROY might be a hard sell to some of you. They're not the most accessible band in the world, I'll admit. But these songs, these songs in particular out of their entire discography are the most dynamic and frankly amazing. There's melody, there's chaos, there are bass riffs on an epic scale...my favorite stuff by them ever and that's saying something. VIOLENT PARTY are another set of DIY heros, having slung out a couple of un-promoted and relatively un-talked EPs on their own already without a great deal of popular attention paid to their unique brand of raw throwback d-beat. They've always given off a vibe similar to early DEATHCHARGE, a kind of unique play on the DISCHARGE formula that just screams "we don't give a fuck what you think". At the end of the day, this split is way more raw, way more mysterious and way more punk than whatever "mysterious guy" shit people are paying a million bucks on ebay for these days.

LOTUS FUCKER – "Forever My Fighting Spirit" LP (SPHC / Katorga Works)
Haha fuck, I've already spilled a mile of ink on how amazing this
record is. An exceptional band who've put out their best work yet.
No more need be said except this: if you read this magazine, you
fucking need this record.

In previous years I've put individual demos in my top ten, but this year provided such a bounty of fucking amazing demos that I had to provide a list of great demos from this year. At least four of these bands have put out records or will be releasing records soon, so keep an eye out for all of these names, because they'll be top ten material in 2013 for sure:
MIDNITE BRAIN demo & tour tape.
ITANŞHA "Paranoia" demo
SCUMRAID
SEX DWARF
SAD BOYS
VAARALLINEN
CISMA "Imagenes Podrias" demo
LIFEFORM
LIFE LOCK "Who'll Make Noise Not Music" demo
RATAS RABIOSAS

AL QUINT

2010 and 2011 were well above-average years for records. But I don't think that was the case for 2012. Don't get me wrong, there were some kick-ass records this year and I didn't have a lot of trouble coming up with a top ten and it was easy to fill my year-end Sonic Overload with over two hours of strong material. But as I peruse this list, I realize that there's a huge gap between the top three and the other seven, which are more or less in order but not etched in stone. I also kept going back and forth between JOINT D≠ and HANK WOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS for album of the year. After those two and CRAZY SPIRIT's 12", you have some very good records but nothing I'd really consider as next-level or awe-inspiring as that trio.

But there were some good shows and, from a personal perspective, this was a much better year overall than the last few. Let's just say there had been turmoil and obstacles to deal with and they were conquered. One of the highlights was Ellen and I taking a trip to Seattle and Portland, our first real vacation together in four years and the first time we'd been out to that part of the country. Plus, she's been working at a job that's a huge challenge but really helping people—social work with clients who are HIV-positive ex-convicts or still incarcerated. It takes a person with a big heart to take on that kind of a job and Ellen certainly has one. On with the list!

LP/12"

JOINT D≠ – "Strike Gently" LP (Sorry State)
This band were originally known as JOINT DAMAGE, until an absolutely *aweful* rap/metal band from Rhode Island with the same name threatened to sue them. So JOINT D≠ it was. The vocalist/guitarist Nick Goode is also in BRAIN F≠ (aka FLANNEL) and while there are some similarities, these songs are in more of a hardcore vein. What makes it great, though, is the dense sonic thundercloud that provides the setting for the band's gnashing sound, especially on "(I'm) Haunted," the best song I heard all year.

HANK WOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS – "Go Home" 12" (Toxic State)
Nasty garage punk rockers from NYC and it's a mind-messing affair. Crazy organ and percussion permeate this band's gnashing, raving clatter. Along with the cantankerous lyrics, which are repeated until a mantra-like numbness has set in, this is down and dirty attitudinal stuff that backs it up with raucous might. Just calling it garage might actually be simplifying things a bit because it's got a lot more going on, but the band's brashness is what you notice right away.

CRAZY SPIRIT – 12" (Toxic State)
Ah, another record on Toxic State, and one that I'd had trouble getting my hands on until randomly running across it in a distro box at a show. Score! Killer in every way, from the superb packaging to the musical contents. CRAZY SPIRIT have their own sound, something distinctive. Sick'n'raspy vocals—sometimes buried in the mix—buzz-stun guitar and clattering, galloping beats that turn this into something of a hardcore hoedown. Their show with HANK WOOD was one of the best I saw all year.

SCHOOL JERKS – LP (Grave Mistake)
Sloppy and snarling punks from Toronto finally unleash their 12" debut after a handful of singles. It's a lean, mean sound with a burnin' SoCal flavor. You keep hearing about how OFF! are the saviors of old school hardcore punk, since the living legend Keith Morris decided to get back to his "roots." I actually like OFF! but this record leaves theirs in the dust. It has a kinetic explosiveness. If you liked what AMDI PETERSENS ARME did in the early '00s, this will be right up your alley.

BOSTON STRANGLER – "Primitive" LP (Fun With Smack)
Believe the hype—this is some prime Boston hardcore. Let's be blunt—this is an absolutely shameless tribute, borrowing more than a few riffs here and there and that's from just about all of the early '80s crop of bands. "Primitive" is Boston through and through, with the opening and closing "busts" having local references—the Winter Hill Gang and its boss Whitey Bulger, who was arrested last year after nearly fifteen years on the lam, which explains the title "Bulger Breakout." Then there's Ban's Mass accent ("get out of *heah*," "doesn't *mattah*"). As I said, shameless, but I'd much rather hear a band do this in 2012 than old bands getting back together and doing it half-heartedly or releasing embarrassingly bad new music (cough*DYS*cough). Sure, it's been done before, but they nail it.

TV FREAKS – LP (Schizophrenic)
An edgy garage punk sound that comes across as the bastard offspring of SHITTY LIMITS and EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING, but they come across as a bit more confrontational, particularly for "You're Cool," with a Travis Bickel-esque "are you lookin' at *me*?!" Their new 7", also on Schizophrenic, is a burner as well. The false start at the beginning of the album is quite humorous.

WHITE LUNG – "Sorry" LP (Deranged)
Surging, melodic and stinging punk has long been WHITE LUNG's calling card and that's still the case on their second album. An '80s gothic doominess punctuates their sound but they add a muscular element—they definitely come down on the punk side of the equation. Mish's vocals are emotional and soaring without being excessive or overly angst-ridden.

TOKYO STORM WARNING – "High Times at the Black Eye" LP (Mind / No Mind)
The deal with this Cleveland band is the songs were recorded in 2004 but the album was finally released in early 2012. Nervy, energetic rock that has some math rock propensities but it's presented with sturdy guitars, bass and drums. They can be brooding on a song like "Sabotage on the Telephone Line" or downright hooky for "Curate My Love." Pressed in a ridiculously small quantity of 100 copies, but you can download it for free; I'd strongly urge you to do so. www.tokyostormwarning1.bandcamp.com

CREEM – LP (Katorga Works)
Ex-NOMOS forging ahead with tough, rockin' hardcore that has the requisite venom and bile but there's more to it than that. Plenty of US hardcore strains in their sound—"Dweller" takes a page from DYS—but the mid-tempo punk anthem "The Bricks" adds some No Future records guitar trills and they cover early '80s UK band BLACK EASTER's "What the Fuck."

NÜ SENSAE– "Sundowning" LP (Suicide Squeeze)
I just reviewed this last month but, in brief, NÜ SENSAE were originally a bass and drums two piece and have added a guitarist and, while it might be a more conventional approach, there's no denying the power in this band's music. They remind me of BABES IN TOYLAND, at times, with Andrea's vocals ranging from subdued to howling and the band mix up the pure aggro with other impulses, such as the post-punk for "Spit Gifting" or SONIC YOUTH-inspired swirl for "Eat Your Mind." A cacophonous roar but there are intricate, nuanced elements as well.

The rest: 7"s and demos
All of these are 7"s, in fact, except for the WETBRAIN demo and POOR LILY "3 songs" CD. More or less ranked in order:

BIG EYES – "Back From the Moon/I Don't Care about Friday Night" (Grave Mistake)
DRY HUMP – "Dry Hump" (Cowabunga)
WETBRAIN – "Wetbrain"
BLOODKROW BUTCHER – "Anti War" (Side Two)
BILL BONDSMEN – "Overcrowded Control" (Fourteegee)
DOUBLE NEGATIVE – "Hardcore Confusion Vol. 3 & 4" (Sorry State)
POOR LILY – "3 Songs" (self-released)
MÜLLTÜTE – "Keine Ziet" EP (HeartFirst)
BRAIN KILLER – "War" EP (Framework / Vinyl Rites)
ANCIENT FILTH – "Ancient Filth" EP (Shock to the System)

Best Live (in no particular order)
COCK SPARRER, HANK WOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS, CRAZY SPIRIT, CRIATURAS, ANCIENT FILTH, BOSTON STRANGLER, CROSSING CHAOS, HOAX, DOUBLE NEGATIVE, CEREMONY, DRY HUMP, ARCTIC FLOWERS.

PAUL LUCICH

1. RAT COLUMNS – "Sceptre Hole" LP (Smart Guy)
Punks is people and people love ambiguous melancholy (if you want to see why punks, and people in general, don't like unambiguous happiness Google image "Romney Family" and gauge your internal reaction). This is the refined, adult punk contemporary version of ambiguous melancholy, and it's great. It's sounds like a foggy morning in the Sunset (district) distilled into beach jams that aren't surfy, but are beachy. They've been able to acutely capture an experience in a way that is so catchy it easily lends itself to multiple listens.

2. PROTOMARTYR – "Colpi Proibiti" EP (X!)
I got this garagey Detroit post punk to review and I am feeling it. There's dynamic guitar work that's evocative of the FALL and the vocals melodies sound effortless and deliver hooks for days. The songs don't sound like the DEAD MILKMEN, but they have that simple (well put together), incredibly catchy, fun quality that is characteristic of a band like the DEAD MILKMEN. You hear addicts talk about that priming the pump phenomenon. After once, twice, instead of being satisfied, you simply want more than you did before you started.

3. SPRAY PAINT – "Spock Fingers/Pink Pus" (S.S.)
This is a late addition. Something I just stumbled upon today as I was compiling this list... but it's impossible not to include. Like a catchy, more energetic, less pretentious, much funner WIRE. I've heard the URINALS used as a reference point and that's accurate too. They's using pretty basic instrumentation and a minimal repetitive

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quality to structuring the song that works really well. Like if ERIK SATIE wrote the music for a WIRE song and then the URINALS made it fun. "Spock Fingers" is one of the best songs I've heard all year. Wish I had more time to spend with it before I wrote this.

4. TRONICS – "Shark Fucks/Time Off" (What's Your Rupture)

UK DIY or DIE. This is awesome. I remember hearing some of the stuff on the Messthetics series for the first time and being blown away by how great it was. This was among the best of the best, a bona fide hit. The most classic song that was (re)released this year. Cardboard box drums that evoke hits by US DIY teen punk prodigies the MANIAX, recorded under water in a kitchen.

5. BAADER BRAINS – "New Hope Era Colony" LP (Empyre / Clean Plate / Ebullition)

This is an experience. A full product and not just sounds. It's totally absorbing. It has the ability to create a surreality that'd you like to live in, and allows you to live in it while the music plays. So much good music is experiential, you feel something when you listen to it; this has that innate experiential quality. At its roots is political hardcore, but it's also multi-faceted and complex.

6. MIKAL CRONIN – "Tide/You Gotta Have Someone" (Goner)

This may have come out in really late (December) 2011, but I didn't hear it and it didn't officially hit these pages until the 2012 calendar year so I'm including it. One nice thing about this record is that it doesn't readily lend itself to being over analyzed and deconstructed because it just sounds so good and it all comes together so well that the songs seem deceptively simple. Garage pop that's the more upbeat counterpoint to the RAT COLUMNS record, that's instantly catchy without sounding generic or contrived. There are (good) psychedelic solos.

7. INDEX – demo (Cut Up Tapes)

I'll lead with a lazy but incredibly accurate sonic reference point. This band contains members of CULTURE KIDS and BRILLIANT COLORS and it sounds like the perfect cross between the two bands. Take some muscular but catchy straightforward, chord-oriented guitar riffage and add dreamy punk vocals and you've got some jams that sound like they'd able to reconcile and capture two very disparate parts of San Francisco; the high strung tension of the city and the endlessly cool, breezy quality of the beach.

8. THE SORE THUMBS – the song "Stolen Bones" from the "Fool's Errand" LP (Pirates Press)

Sure, every once in a while I enjoy buttoning up a crisp Fred Perry and listening to some street punk—although I absolutely refuse to say "cheers" unless I'm actually clinking glasses with someone. When Americans say "cheers" in any other context (especially in emails) it makes my skin crawl. I also still put on my old RANCID records with religious regularity. That said, the song "Stolen Bones" is the best melodic street punk I've heard all year (although that PROXY song "Police Car" gave it a good run for its money). Although the "Fool's Errand" LP as a whole was kind of a let down, the song "Stolen Bones" captured the band at its best.

9. CRIMINAL CODE – "Cold Thoughts" LP (Inimical)

I love the riffs. Especially the riff from "Dry Spell" which makes that song instantly classic. The guitar sound and vocals popped way more, they bled together on the demo than they do on this, which is a little disappointing to my ears, because it makes it harder to let the crucial nature of the riffs shine through... but I love the riffs and I love the songs and the album art is awesome. Like a flanged out EFFIGIES or HÜSKER DÜ.

10. GENERACION SUICIDA – "En Vivo" tape (self-released)

I enjoyed watching this band play live as much, if not more, than I enjoyed watching any other band this year. Maybe part of it was being able to see a band this good at a small intimate show. Maybe it was the unassuming sincere take on MASSHYSTERI-style jams that sounded fresh and original as opposed to contrived and tired. Whatever it was, I really enjoyed it and this live cassette totally captured that experience.

MIKE FRIEDBERG

Mike Friedberg from *No Thanks, Fuck Everything* Zine.

Being a first year middle school teacher, I feel like I barely had moments to breathe, let alone stay up to date on records. Unfortunately, my list has been pretty limited to what I have been exposed to and sought out in limited capacity, and is thus pretty Western-centric. DX's "All Western Junk" correctly asserted that bands from countries besides the US, Sweden, and Japan often get horribly overlooked. That said, I'm admittedly guilty myself, and while I'm still waiting for new records by FRAMTID and LEBENDEN TOTEN, 2012 produced some excellent punk record, from various countries, hyped or not. Finally, I'm still waiting for my ISTERISMO LP, but I'm sure if I had it it'd be here.

D-CLONE – "Creation and Destroy" 12" (540)

This is the *Illmatic* of D-beat LPs. Like Nas' debut, D-Clone's has perfect production, songwriting and length. In a sea of tragically boring DISCLOSE copies, this band stands out as fresh and original. Everything about this record is fantastic, right down to the uses of various pedals, but the drumming is what really puts this over the top. This guy is the icing on the Kawakami cake. Finally, I usually despise when bands rerecord songs they have already released, but the new versions of some of these tracks are outstanding, particularly "Life Is…".

BLOODKROW BUTCHER – all 2012 releases

Their split tape was good. This is great. I've always thought that the SHITLICKERS 7" was one of the best of the '80s Swedish crop, and so do these Bostonians. These leaders of the fuckin' assholes rip through five brilliant songs of GBG worship. Like their heroes, the recording has a great balance between a raw yet discernible sound. These tracks have a distinct UK82 influence with riffs that will please SKEPTIX fans worldwide.

INFERNÖH – "War Tjard" EP

Along with HERATYS and SKITKIDS—this family tree of TOTALITÄR-worshippers crank out gems. This has some large, monstrous production. These songs sound real fuckin' heavy.

INSTITUTION – "Domen Ar Satt" 12" (De:Nihil)

This sounds even more like TOTALITÄR and is mastered nice and loud with a great mix where everything sounds crystal clear. This is incredible.

SICKOIDS – LP (Residue)

This is one of the most original sounding HC records I've heard in a while. The guitar tone(s) really put this thing over the top. Can't wait to hear what these guys do next.

VIOLENT END – demo tape

Mean fucking meat and potatoes HC.

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY – "Ecstatic Vision" LP (Residue)

For whatever reasons, this band has unfortunately never gotten the credit it deserves. Nonetheless, they continue to crank out fantastic records and memorable songs. The X comparisons are no longer valid as they've really come into a sound all their own. This has a great, raw recording that really give these songs a nice touch. Catchy songs, fantastic musicianship, an all-around fantastic LP.

IN SCHOOL – demo

Fucking great tape from Ms. Nikpour and co. Like the SICKOIDS LP, the guitar tone really gives it a boost with tones similar to HÜSKER DÜ and ARTICLES OF FAITH. This could be a 7". Great fast HC that gets stuck in your head.

FRENZY – "Noizey Trouble" EP (Distort Reality)

I usually immediately pass over records that have "noiz" in their title or ridiculous DISORDER-inspired drawings on the cover. While I actually like the latter, both have become a tired cliché. This blazing seven-song ripper is a light in the darkness however, as, like the previous record, manages to avoid the monotony that so many bands of this ilk succumb to. This sounds even more like NERVESKADE than I thought, although with less pedals/static, and more riffs influenced by early '80s USHC. In fact, this sounds like something that in many ways could fit in with collections of *Flex Your Head* fanatics, with the addition of the cool uses of flanger and phaser pedals. Seven great, infectious songs, along with a cool poster.

BOSTON STRANGLER – LP (Fun with Smack)

This is hyped as hell, but for good reason. Great LP.

SHIVA ADDANKI

I spent most of the year exploring space and wallowing here on earth in existential dread. I still dig all the records from last year's list: modern underground music is great right now, more bands are going at it on their own terms, letting dust stay dust.

HANK WOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS – "Go Home" 12" / DAWN OF HUMANS – "Blurst of the Birdfish" EP / CRAZY SPIRIT – 12" (Toxic State)

I've written enough about these bands, they're some of my favorites ever. I listened to the HAMMERHEADS record more than any other piece of music this year.

BROWN SUGAR – "Luvly" EP (Cowabunga)

Transcendent, raw and free as fuck. One of the only bands out there who know how to laugh without looking pathetic and sheepish, and know how to hate without coming off like victims. I'm bummed it's their last, reeeaal bummed.

SPIRITUAL WARRIORS, S.H.I.T., LA MISMA, KREMLIN and CISMA tapes

Simple yet entirely fresh sounding raw HC. Further testaments against the triumph of nostalgic weenies. I'm excited to see what all these freaks do next.

WHITE FENCE – "Family Perfume Vol. 1 and 2" 2xLP (Woodsist)

A killer, bedroom psych record that doesn't play solvent with the booming nostalgia market—isolated creativity and manic mood swings delivered with hooks that melt. A real modern vision—confused and all over the place.

GOOSEBUMPS – "I Hate My Body" EP (Burn Books) / HOAX – second and third EPs (Youth Attack & Painkiller)

Two of the ugliest, most downtrodden bands out there—self-loathing cynicism can do powerful things if you smear enough fistfuls over guitars and drums. Standing up to the real test, both of them had me sold from their live show, and met high expectations on record.

GRASS WIDOW – "Internal Logic" LP (HLR)

Moody, spacey music from a world of their own—no easy niches. They're hard to describe without the excessive use of metaphors, and I like that.

ILEGAL – third EP (Lengua Armada) and LP (La Vida Es Un Mus)

Hardcore was supposed to be the most intense clusterfuck of negative energy committed to sonic space—I get the feeling that ILEGAL are acutely aware of that, and yet they give off the most sincerely "positive" (for lack of a better word) attitude I've seen in a worthwhile modern band. This band is a real anomaly and I'm glad they've been consistent enough to make a third consecutive appearance on my bullshit list.

Other good stuff:

DRY HUMP – second 7"
BLOODKROW BUTCHER – second 7"
SCHOOL JERKS – LP
DRAPETOMANIA – 7"
SADICOS – demo
THE FLOOR ABOVE – demos
RAT COLUMNS – "Sceptre Hole" LP
USELESS EATERS

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WILL KINSER

MIND SPIDERS – "Meltdown" LP (Dirtnap)

Perfect blend of TUBEWAY ARMY and powerpop. A great all around record.

NEON PISS – LP (Deranged)

Probably my favorite band this year.

SICKOIDS – LP (Residue)

SICKOIDS just play hardcore how it's meant to be played. Hard, fast, and to the point.

PREGNANCY SCARES – EP (Deranged)

Top tens are usually reserved for LP's unless I'm doing 7"s in a separate list, but to be honest this EP just blew me away. Mixing the best elements of hardcore, surf, garage and noise.

TERRIBLE FEELINGS – "Shadows" LP (Deranged)

Swedish darlings pull off an interesting hybrid of classic Swedish punk with melancholic undertones, which brings to mind a lot of indie favorites.

INFERNÖH – "War Tjard" 12" (D-Takt)

This is the best old school Swedish hardcore going these days. Anyone who thinks otherwise will have to fight me.

WARSONG – "The Caravan" LP (Sabotage / Doomtown / Erste Theke Tonträger)

This record is worth getting just for the first song alone. WARSONG has a very distinctive sound all of its own, check out this record, or last year's favorite *Ancient Times*.

MRS. MAGICIAN – "Strange Heaven" LP (Swami)

This is the damn right catchiest record of the year. It isn't necessarily punk per se, but they are on an independent label and travel the same roads, so I think they deserve a spot in this magazine.

THE WAR GOES ON – "This Shitty Life" EP (New Dark Age)

This is crucial, doom-laden punk that proves the fact that the Dane's have one of the best scenes in the punk world. Fans of NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS take note.

BOSTON STRANGLER – "Primitive" LP (Fun with Smack)

This is East Coast hardcore played in the way all the classic Boston bands from Boston used to. Fast and aggressive. I love old-school straightedge and this record reminds me why.

RATFACE – "Ratfaced" EP (Mind Skull)

Seriously this is the best no frills rawpunk going today. Forget all the hyped bands and listen to the real deal. The best in the genre.

TRAGEDY – "Darker Days Ahead" LP (Tragedy)

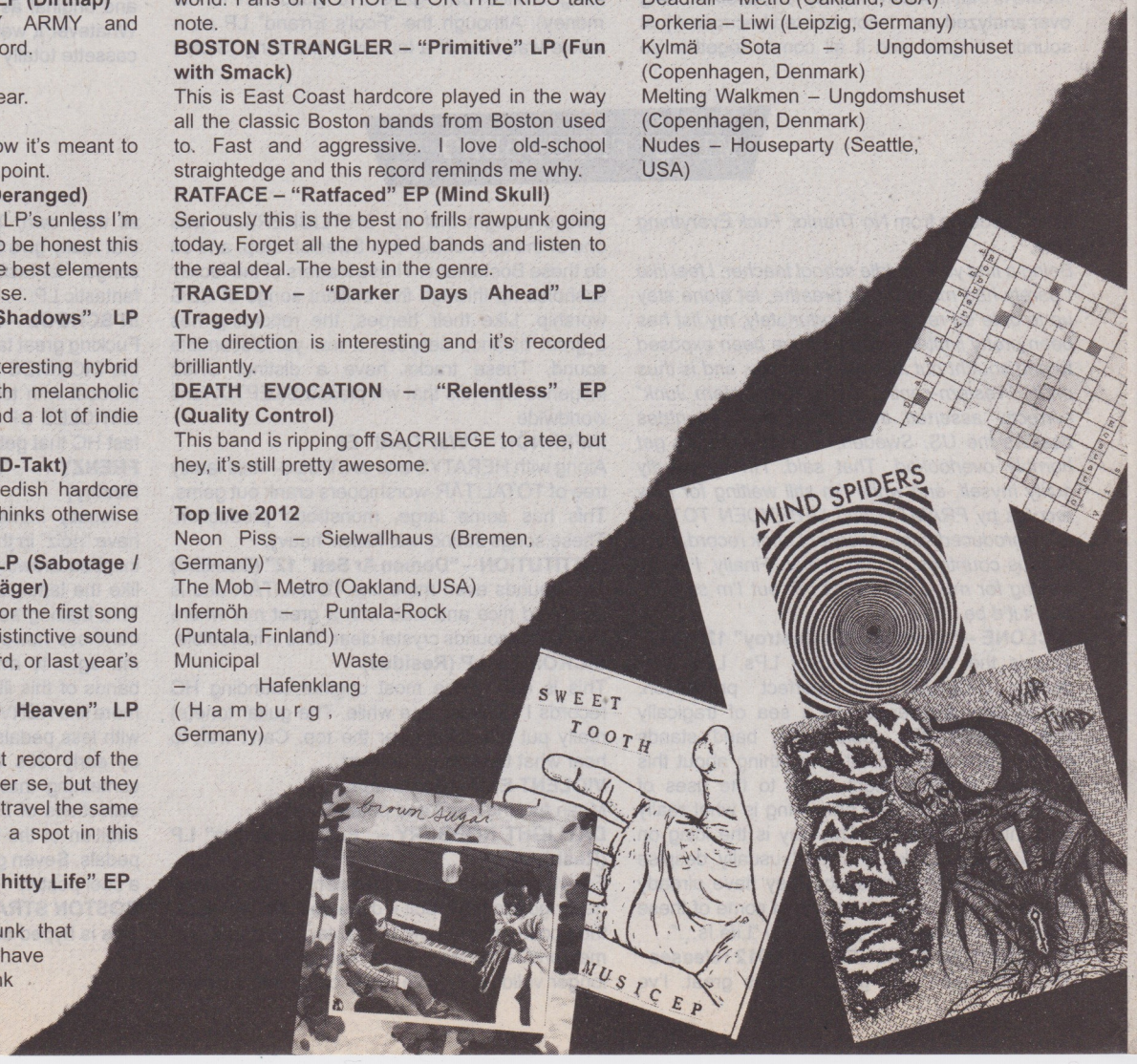
The direction is interesting and it's recorded brilliantly.

DEATH EVOCATION – "Relentless" EP (Quality Control)

This band is ripping off SACRILEGE to a tee, but hey, it's still pretty awesome.

Top live 2012

Neon Piss – Sielwallhaus (Bremen, Germany)
The Mob – Metro (Oakland, USA)
Infernöh – Puntala-Rock (Puntala, Finland)
Municipal Waste – Hafenklang (Hamburg, Germany)
Deadfall – Metro (Oakland, USA)
Porkeria – Liwi (Leipzig, Germany)
Kylmä Sota – Ungdomshuset (Copenhagen, Denmark)
Melting Walkmen – Ungdomshuset (Copenhagen, Denmark)
Nudes – Houseparty (Seattle, USA)



MARIAM BASTANI

Man alive, what a year… I'm not sorry to see 2012 on its way, but thankfully there were a ton of great records... I get it when people say that they have very "refined" taste when it comes to the "best" records and all that shit, but for me, I just wanna listen to shit that will move me in some way. Whether it's to let all of this hate out or to make out, here are some crucial jams I dug this year. Some of this you have seen all over the preceding pages so I'm not gonna get crazy the with descriptions, but there are some sleepers in here… Up Yours.

LPs:

BOSTON STRANGLER – "Primitive" LP (Fun With Smack)
There is a reason this is one a bunch of top tens and everyone is blowing their proverbial loads about this LP, it's that good.

ORDEN MUNDIAL – 12" (Discos Basura)
Super raw insanity inducing hardcore with politics I can alight with. Punk is radical..

BAADER BRAINS – "New Era Hope Colony" 12" (Empyre / Clean Plate / Ebullition)
The perfect record in presentation, style and sound. I hate the term "concept record," but this is the best representation I have ever seen/heard without the pretension. This record illustrates a genuine love for time and thought that is usually an afterthought in punk. This record does not underestimate its audience.

CRIMINAL CODE – "Cold Thought" 12" (Inimical)
Total make out record.

NO STATIK – "Everywhere You Aren't Looking" LP (Prank)
Definitely weird hardcore with some feral screams.

NITAD – "Rastlös och Vild" LP (Mourningwood)
This one almost slipped me by, but luckily I got to review it. Best of Scandi-style hc with nonstop riffage and some of the best vocals in punk.

BIRTH DEFORMITIES – "Suburbanized" 10" (Cowabunga)
Again, everyone loves this. The hc is great on here and the lyrics while pretty dumb, definitely cover some complex and undeniably personal topics. Good, rudimentary bare bones hc.

WALLS – "The Future is Wide Open" LP (Iron Lung)
Weird, harsh dissonant hardcore with a complete madman singing. Complete. Madman.

SLICES – "Still Cruising" LP (Iron Lung)
Loved the last one and I love this one.

WICCANS – "Field II" LP (Hardware / Katorga) / BUKKAKE BOYS – LP (Sorry State)
Sharing a line because I like both of these records for the same reason. Solid blistering hc that lets me crawl inside myself and daydream of arson.

EPs:

TERCER MUNDO – "Depreción" EP (Cintas Pepe)
An island of reality in an Ocean of Diarrhea. This is the most important record to come out in 2012. No shit.

KREMLIN — "Will you Feed Me" EP (Hardware)
You already know about this record and you know it's fucked up.

HUNTING PARTY – "Red Summer" EP (Hesitation Wound)
Crushing hardcore with enough twists to keep your ear alert. Great lyrics that are as introspective as they are observant.

ABSURDO – "Tots Sants" EP (Discos Absurdos)
This is a newbie and a good one. Nasty shrill super-fucking-fast piccolo snare and vocals in your stupid face.

FRACASO – "Desafío Antiautoritario" 7" (self-released)
Raw hatred and despair from Caracas. Frenzied drums, driving bass and painful screams.

HASSLER – "Asphyxiate" EP (Schizophrenic)
Ok…best from east meets Nordic seas meets the frigid Canadian winter with driving hardcore that leaves no time for breathing. The best mix of influences without aping the same old shit. So good.

GOOD THROB – "Feminazi" EP (Super-fi)
Sure there is a dick in the band, but don't think that it would stop them from cutting yours off…

SUDOR – "Cruces de Cables" EP (Solo Para Punks / Beat Generation)
Good music, good comics…that's pretty much my whole life in a 7".

PERMACULTURE – "Swallow What you're given" EP (Inflammable Material)
Awesome peace punk perfectly delivered.

DHK – "Primera Maketa" EP (Odio los Discos)
Stripped down D-beat from the southern regions of places that punks only hear about through music…shame on you guys.
Sneaking in one more...

DAWN OF HUMANS – "Blurst of the Birdfish" EP (Toxic State)
I love this band. Just sayin'...

Live:

CONDITION – Hands down the best live set I saw in 2012. The fear and excitement in the crowd was palatable. Best front man right now!

BRAIN TUMORS – watching this band play made me feel like I was back home in the Midwest. It's not about "performing" or playing well, it's about catharsis. Weirdoes playing hopeful, but hateful music.

GRINDLANDIA FEST IN VICTORIA, CANADA – I know what you are thinking, but believe me when I say that this woman organized grind fest in Victoria was one of the best shows with the best vibes I have ever been to. All the bands ruled. Keep it up ladies!

BLOODKROW BUTCHER – the reason this was a great show is because while BKB is delivering a set that everyone is eating up, pogoing and pitting, the singer accidently hit a photographer in the head with the mic. He then proceeded to walk over mid song and kindly rub the photographer on the head where he was hit. Sweet.

WALLS – Aside from the killer music wailing out of the instruments, the singer of this band is totally nutso. The guy is menacing and amazing. You want him to like you, yet you are completely terrified of him.

STRESSORS – This is what hardcore actually looks like. Nerdy, yes. Adorable, yes. Totally musically unfuckwithable, yes.

URBAN BLIGHT – Now broken up, this band has been killing it for year and I really feel like they never got the recognition they deserved. The hardcore style they play is definitely unique and had enough recognizable delivery and riffage for hc kids to be interested, but more creativity and vision than anyone was ready for.

CULTURE KIDS – The LP is good, but their live performance is better—raw, fast hardcore with long hair, weed and surfing. Cali stereotype, sure, but these fuckers can play.

IRON LUNG – Siamese twins geniuses separated at birth… I have never seen a band so incredibly intuitive.

Tapes:

S.H.I.T., PROXY, SADICOS, SPIRITUAL WARRIORS, IN SCHOOL, AUTONOMY, DISPLEASURE, HOUNDS OF HATE, UNA BÈSTIA INCONTROLABLE, LIVID.

Re-issues and old shit:

V/A – "New breed: Tape Compilation" 2xLP (Lush Life / Wardance), STRESS – "Athens Burning I" and "Athens Burning II" EPs (B-otherSide / Kozaos Pool Productions) [technically came out in 2011, but made it here this year], PVP – "Miedo" LP (Beat Generation), ESKORIA – "Discografía 1986-1987" 2xLP (Metadona), V/A – "La Lucha Continua" LP (Vomito Punk Rock), RAYGUN – "Sotamuistoja Recordings 1985-1995" 12" THE SLEEPERS – "Painless Nights" LP (Superior Viaduct), PARALISIS INFANTIL – "Demo '87" EP (Canal 9 / Discos es Conocimiento), LIXOMANIA – "Violencia e Sobrevivencia" EP (Nada Nada / Spicoli), ABADDON – "Wet Za Wet" LP (Warsaw Pact) GOD'S WILL – "This is God's Will" EP (Signaler Fran Ovan), PELIGRO SOCIAL – "No Religión" LP (Tankcrimes), SMERSH "Cassette Pets" 2xLP (Dark Entries), V/A – "Las Cuatro Bandas" LP (Lengua Armada), DICKS – all reissues, INOCENTES – "Miséria e Fome" EP (Nada Nada / Spicoli)

Other records that rocked my world:

BRAIN TUMORS – "Fuck You Forever" EP (Deranged), CRAZY SPIRIT – LP (Toxic State), CARBURETOR DUNG – "Ingingku Rejam Raksasa Kejam" 10" (Famed), CONDITION – "Deteriorating" EP (De:Nihil), YDINTUHO / KYLMÄ SOTA – split 7" EP (Psychedelica), COFFIN PRICKS – "Group Home Haircut" EP (Stationary(Heart)), LOTUS FUCKER – "Forever My Fighting Spirit" LP (SPHC / Katorga Works), WILD MOHICANS – "Police Violence/Drunk Alone" (self-released),

WOOLF – "The Right Way to Play" LP (La Vida es un Mus), VAARALINEN – "Hautausmaa" EP (Full Force Hardcore), ILEGAL – "El Aire Libre Fuera de los Dientes del Monstruo Tirano y Canibal" LP (La Vida Es Un Mus), FRENZY – "Noizey Trouble" EP (Distort Reality), CREEM – LP (Deranged / Katorga Works), CONFINES – "Some Sick Joke" EP (Labor of Love / Side Two), STRESSORS – "Psychotic Break" EP (Warthog Speak)

ATENTADO – "Días de Rabia" LP (La Vida es un Mus), DAYLIGHT ROBBERY – "Ecstatic Vision" LP (Residue), HATESTORY – "Lovestory" CD, BLOODKROW BUTCHER – "Anti War" (Side Two), CRIMSON SCARLET – "Sanctuary / Two Kinds of Red" (Cool Summer)

Non-Music cool stuff in 2012:
Get Shot photo book by Martin Sorrendeguy, *Destroying Everything* photo book by Ricky Adam, *Antipatia* zine, *Shotgun Seamstress Zine Anthology* by -Mend my Dress press, *Slander* zine by Mimi Nguyen, *Fix My Head* zine by Anna Vo, *Spit and Passion* by Cristy Road, Breathing Light interview in *MRR*, Subversion Fest by Radical Punks Never Die, Think and Die thinking Collective in San Jose, All the people who help to put *MRR* out every month, Darby Crash rides Forever.

LYDIA PHELPS

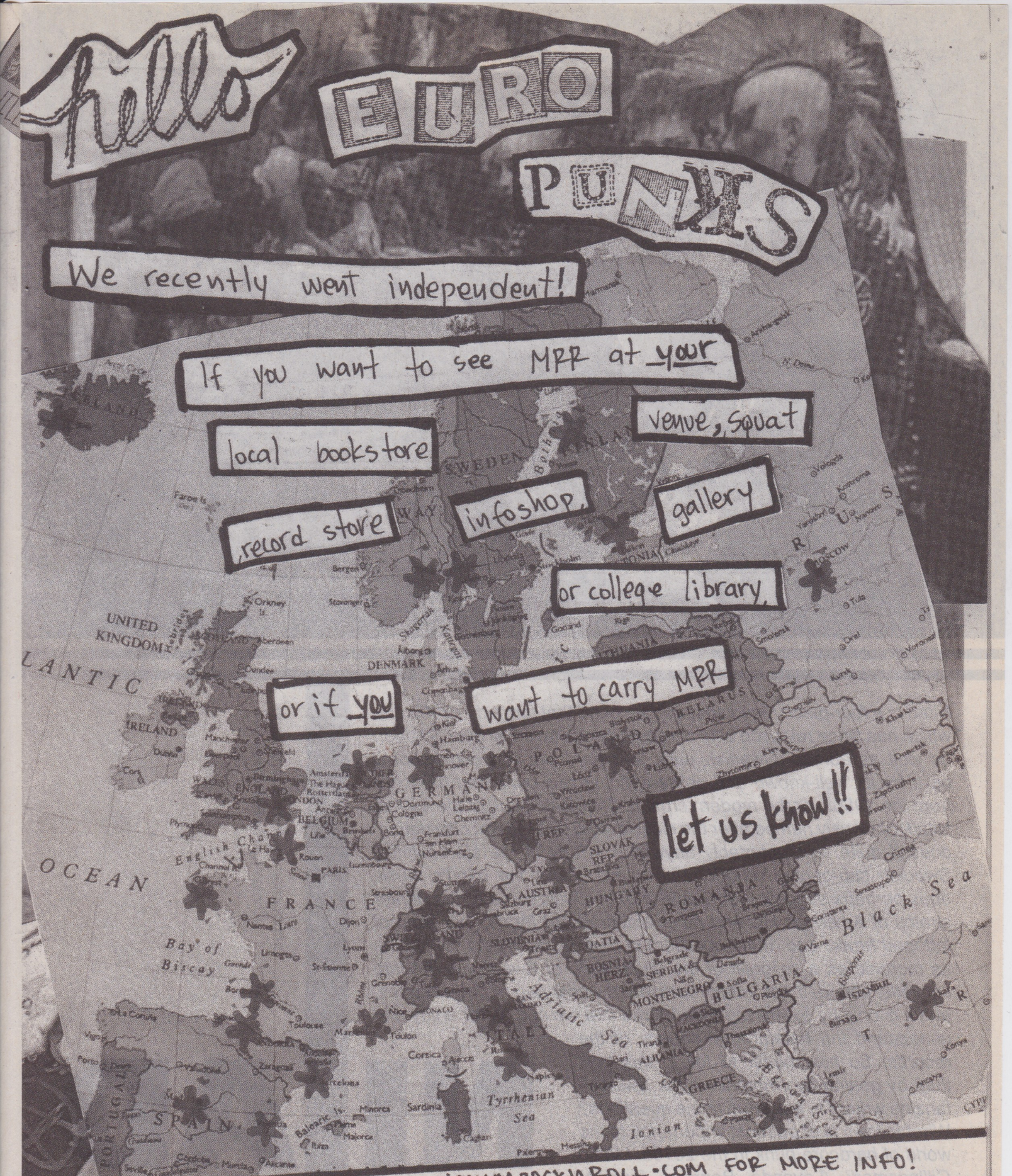
This was such a crazy year for me! Moving to the MRR *compound means I am spoiled for choice and constantly exposed to new and exciting things! So many good punk shows and sooo many releases! I will admit, I was not carried away (too much) by the recent wave of raw punk (back home we call it "kàtsa"), so I often found myself longing for sounds that would travel me to other places far and wide, the soundtrack to a surreal black-and-white dream of urban misery and longing. These records helped do that.*

1. ANTIMOB – LP (Εξωτικός Παροξυσμός)
Words fail me. They usually do when it comes to the big, important stuff. There is so much to be said of this monoliic Greek band and their sound, but the music does it much better justice my ramblings. I love and admire these guys immensely, and their music speaks volumes to me, more than I can begin to descibe! Get this now!
2. CRIMINAL CODE – "Cold Thought" 12" (Inimical) and "Hollowed" EP (Deranged)
Band of the year from Tacoma, Washington! I kind of knew it the second I heard this—esoteric, dark and mysterious. It all meshes so well, each track with the next, each release with the next. I liked every single thing they released this year and their live show was also a complete high! I hope they can keep pushing themselves and will continue to amaze us in the coming year! Well done lads!
3. NUN – "Solvents/Cronenberg" (Nihilistic Orbs)
The surprise of the year! Blip/synth punk from outer space (well, Melbourne)! Hearing this makes me as happy as it does angry. Happy because it is sonic bliss to me ears, and angry because I can't understand why punks are so reluctant to fucking *dance! Dance dance dance dammit!*
4. YOUTH AVOIDERS – "Time Flies" EP (Build Me A Bomb / Destructor)
Dark, tight and melodic! French hardcore punk that screams my ear's language. Jolting and actually danceable, though still legitimately angry, the self-titled track is one of the catchiest of the year! Give me more!
5. RED DONS – "Ausländer/Mauvaise Fois" (Dirtnap)
De facto one of my favourite bands in the last decade, they have honed a style all their own and blaze on untouched! "Ausländer" is probably my most played (and heart-felt) track this year (that opening riff is pure gold!) and their show with the ESTRANGED was just magical.
6. LOWER – "Someone's Got It In For Me/But There Has to be More" (540)
Record of the season from Denmark, I cannot flip this fast enough. Two tracks of carefully-articulated genius. I had been waiting for this for so long, I am enthralled!
6. THE WAR GOES ON – "This Shitty Life" EP
I listened to this so much when it came out! I'm a huge NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS fan, and while this is not exactly the same, it still exhumes that great Danish melancholy I so love! The self-titled track is one of the best and catchiest of the year. Oh, and they also sing about football! Score!
6. PARALISIS INFANTIL – "Demo '87" EP (Metadona)
Oh man, this Argentinian band is so good, you just feel it in your bones when it plays! Amazing sound, compositions and atmosphere! Their track "Hijos de Burgueses" still rings in my brain at random moments, especially the opening riff—it's contagious! I'm so glad this exists, it makes me smile!
7. ACID BABY JESUS – LP (Slovenly)
Best band to dance to! Before I left Greece for SF and they went on a bunch of tours around Europe and the US, I danced at their Athens shows like there was no tomorrow! Dreamy yet twisted, garage-tinged inventiveness that should be experienced in tropical wet holes, drenched in beer and surrounded by friends!
8. DESPERAT – "Början På Slutet" EP (Hardcore Victim)
Frenzied crashing hardcore from Sweden. Scream and pound and blow your house down. Circling your room in a furious rage, like a lion in a cage. This is medication that wakes you up and it soothes your raw nerves.
9. ILEGAL – "El Aire Libre Fuera de los Dientes delo Monstruo Tirano Y Canibal" LP (La Vide Es Un Mus)
Noisy and no bullshit harshcore (did I just coin a new punk term?) from Montreal, this is punk as fuck, in every sense of the word! Nothing sounds excess or unnecessary; this is a furious exposition from beginning to end! You have been warned!
10. PARAF – "Prekinuti Koitus: 1978-1979" LP
One of my favourite Yugoslavian punk bands. I am in love with the female vocals (that make appearances on later recordings) but was glad to be introduced to their earlier, more unhinged work. A time travelling machine of a record.

Top 3 tapes:
BLACK COFFEE – tape (Bezerker)
Old-school yet completely relevant no-fills hardcore, with a minimal to-the-point expression, exactly how I like it! I would love to see this band live, so someone book this Oz wonder!
DAMAGES – "Defection" tape (Silenzion Statico)
Urgent, fresh and driven. Melodic and angry, this tape is a rocker! Young punks from/around LA, taking us into the new era!
DEHUMANIZED – tape (self-released)
So dark, so brooding, so mean. So good! Black metal blasts and hardcore experimentations from Olympia, Washington that go deeper that you dare to venture.

Top 3 live shows:
CRIMINAL CODE at the Swamp.
THE RED DONS / ESTRANGED at 1-2-3-4 Go! records and Thrillhouse.
NUX VOMICA at the Swamp.

Would be Number One, but it was officially released at the end of 2011:
ANTI – "Αντι..." LP (Ειρκτη)
One of the best punk records to come out of Greece and one of the best punk records I have *ever* heard! This is a masterpiece—how to explain such a special glimpse of a time now past, this is fucking historic! Overcast by the dark political shadow of the time (and the time now is always), drenched in glassy synths, stone cold beats that fuck with your head and vocals that sing lyrics that make your insides ache with anger and despair. Like a static shock, this will electrocute you and leave you shivering on the floor. This record brings new meaning to the definition "Greek punk" and, if you can truly grasp it, it's a life-altering experience.



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NITAD

Introduction by Tony Gunnarsson
Photos by Ramon Calvo

*Nitad is a four-piece Swedish hardcore band that formed in 2005 and which has since released a lot of records and played all over Sweden as well as abroad. Swedish punk and hardcore is world famous, be it for its well-known and genre-defining raw punk and hardcore from the 1980s, or the modern crust and melodic punk of the 1990s. Nitad, obviously named after the classic song by Moderat Likvidation, doesn't quite sit comfortably anywhere in any of the stereotypical Swedish sub-genres of DIY punk music. While the band's music does perhaps suggest identifiable lineages with some of the darker strains of American HC and other elaborate art forms, this gang of tattooed freaks and drunk outsiders in beards, manifests something as moronic as a zeitgeist of the underworld of Sweden in the late capitalist period. If not, Nitad represent a whole bag of bad attitudes, and it is only by examining their hatred that we can better enjoy and understand the hateful loud sounds of the records. So how better to fail in this task than by getting two moronic drunk Swedish fanzine writers to ask them some questions? What follows is of outmost importance to the world of hardcore punk in the 2010s. Marko Gillingsmark (*Levande Begravd *fanzine) and Tony Gunnarsson (*More Noize *fanzine) talked with Benis (guitar) and Benke (bass) and here are the results.*

MRR: How does it feel to be interviewed for *MRR*? Apparently, Nitad hate punks and crusties, and the whole fucking world for that matter. But perhaps you read *MRR* in secret?

Benis: It feels just like any other interview actually, but I like that there is a subtle *Sika Äpärä* feel to this interview. We don't hate punks and crusties more than the rest of humanity. But yes, these people (typically) belong to humanity, so of course there is hatred. After all, we do love to hate.

Benke: It is like the biggest thing I have ever been a part of. What is *MRR* anyway? I mostly hate myself. Particularly on Mondays.

MRR: How did you form and what are your inspirations? Do you have a rehearsal studio? Do you have driving licenses? Are you afraid of nuclear war?

Benis: We formed on the piss. Benke actually managed to drag our arses to the rehearsal studio. This was 2005. We had a tiny shithole of a rehearsal studio in an industrial area that stank of pure sewerage and sweat. I am the only member to have a driving license, that's why I won't move a metre unless we have a driver. I could never deal with the others if they were pissed off their heads and I was sober. But first and foremost, the reason for that is also that I can drink myself. And potentially take some drugs as well. The risk of a nuclear war is no longer as imminent now that the Cold War has ended, but you can always hope that there will be an explosion somewhere some day.

Benke: It was just as Benis said. All fears of a nuclear war have passed now that Obama has won the election. It was a long and difficult night staying up watching the election night. I can sense peace is on its way now. At least my inner peace. Just been to Bläckan where I got myself a sturdy hard drink of vodka in me. One of the best products Stockholm has to offer. Can feel the happiness arriving already?

MRR: Are you raw? Are you politically conscious? Do you love Discharge as much as Domar?

Benis: We aren't that raw; more annoying and loud. Few people can be bothered with us. Consciousness is within somewhere I guess, but we ignore it most of the time, because it usually puts a spanner in the works if you want to get totally fucked-up and kick over tables and throw beer. Domar doesn't like Discharge, he listens to Duran Duran and A-Ha, his great punk image is all a made-up facade. But Discharge and GBH is the best thing that ever came from the third world country England, besides Pink Floyd and early Genesis.

Benke: I am fucking raw. Boots, tattoos, beard. A fucking raw motherfucker. Every time I see myself in the mirror I wanna eat myself. I am aware that I only live on Mondays. I love Mötörhead more. Iron Maiden the most. But first and foremost all the porno!

MRR: The Nigerian Institute for Training and Development?!

Benis: You what? Did you get stuck in a bad trip or what? Stay calm; picture yourself in a peaceful place. Waterfalls running into a calm, still lake. In the middle of the lake is Rob Halford standing on his hands and shitting himself in the face. The peace. The tranquillity.

Benke: Ask Calle from Kvoteringen.

MRR: The last record is, unbelievably so, fucking great. Can you talk a little about it?

Benis: It is fucking great, that's correct. Ten songs. Mourningwood released it, have probably sold 24 copies so far. We recorded it with Radio Hasse, who have recorded most of our stuff. Viktor played on the drums that belong to the drummer of Amon Amarth. That's why you get the feeling that you're in the bed of Joey from Manowar when you listen to the record. First we recorded a bunch of songs, but it didn't feel fucking right, so then Benke and I went to the rehearsal almost every day for a couple of weeks and re-wrote the fucking shit, and we're happy with the results.

Benke: It's quite OK. Among the best we've done. There isn't much more to say about it apart from what Benis said. We wanted it to be more hardcore. And that came out pretty well!

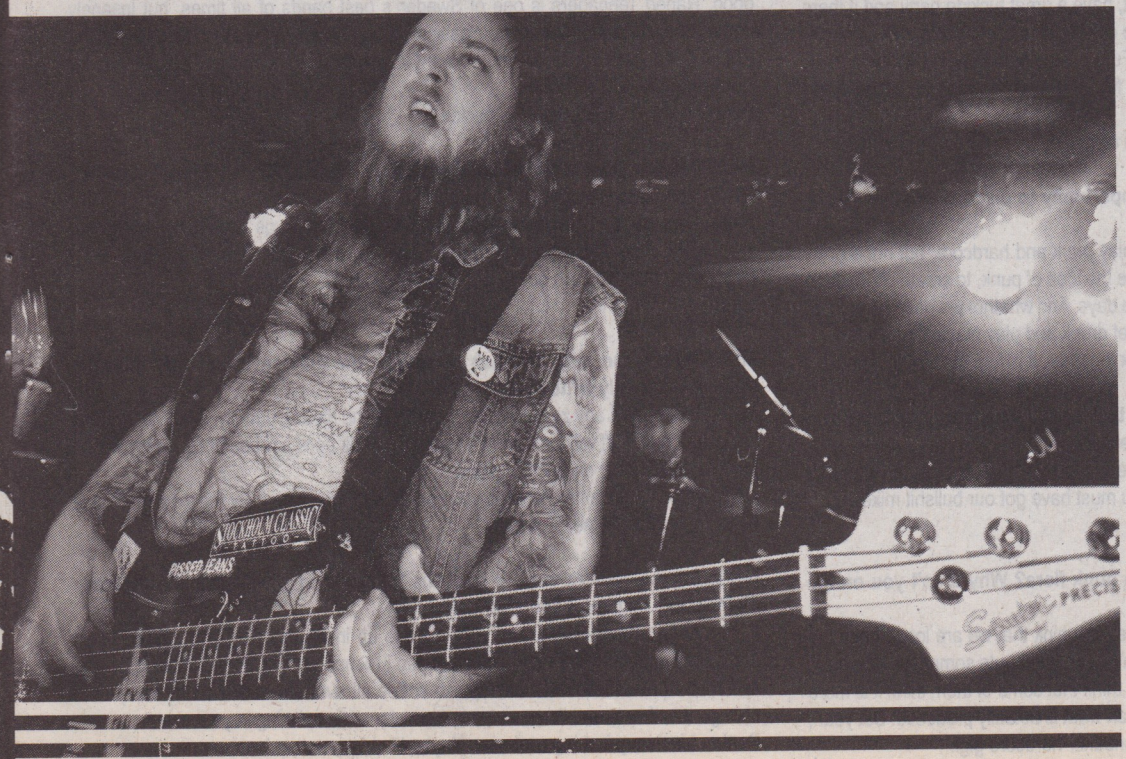
MRR: The press release for this record is, on the other hand, quite 'deep.' "Nitad likes nothing," it says. Reading it you get the idea that there is a Nitad manifesto. What's the meaning of this shit?

Benis: No idea. Nitad likes nothing. Mostly we just sit and complain about stuff but do nothing to change things. Perhaps we like to sit around thinking we're outsiders. Who the hell knows?

Benke: You'll have to ask Lill-Danne who wrote that press release. We thought it was really funny. But actually, we don't like anything, that's true. People think that they like something, but actually that's just an illusion. If you can grasp that then you'll know. Nothing.

MRR: Alright, here you are in the world's premier underground music magazine, can you tell us something about your everyday lives? Your lyrics sort of make you want to shoot up. Are you on State benefits? Do you have loyalty cards at Swahili Bob (hip tattoo studio in Stockholm)? Why is life so fucking depressing?

Benis: I work in support for computers and smart phones, and I want to shoot myself in the knees everyday when I have to get to work. I am looking for something new, can't stand staying. Benke will have to say himself what he's up to. Modde, our singer, is a postman and Viktor works at a school. Benke does have a loyalty card at Swahili Bob, but apparently he traded it for a Milli Vanilli maxi 12" (first press). Why life is fucking depressing? I have no idea. If I knew why, I probably would not feel like shit.



Benke: I work as a fitter. No one from Nitad have ever been on State benefits except for Benis. The rest of us are all true workers. Skinhead! Don't shoot up. Snort it instead and feel happiness spread in your body. Life is golden! By the way, who is Swahili Bob anyway?

MRR: So you like LSD (the record covers)?

Benis: Haha. No, LSD is probably more Mike and Andreas' thing, as it's them who painted the record covers. I am more into hashish, coke and speed. But not at the same time, although that has happened a few times.

Benke: Do you like products, Marko?

MRR: You have released other records apart from the new *Rastlös och Vild*. But if you were asked today, what records do you still like and why?

Benis: Personally I like the new LP, *En Ding Ding Värld* 7", *Den Gudomliga Världen* 7" and the first 7" the best. The other records don't give me the same feeling as the others, even though there are a few good parts here and there.

Benke: Yes there are a few good ones on

"...more into hashish, coke and speed. But not at the same time, althought that has happened a few times"

the last one and a few others on the others. In my opinion we're better when in a live setting than on record.

MRR: In all honesty, who buys your records? Punks? Skins? Heavy metal fans? Hipsters? Christoffer Jonsson? Foreigners?
Benis: It seems no one buys our records.
Benke: Someone must have bought them. I doubt anyone in Africa bought them, anyway. That's all I know. Feels tragic.

MRR: It is said that the musicians in the group Nitad live for their music. What does that mean for you in practice?
Benis: Yes, to be drunk and play music is the best thing I can think of, so why not try to do what you enjoy as much as possible? Benke and I also play in a band called Pig Eyes. I like fucking also, and food. I have a good recommendation: never trust food coming from a skinny chef, a chef should be fat. Then you know that they enjoy good food.
Benke: Who said that? How do you do that? You only live in order to survive. When you feel that you have survived well enough, then you've got to have some intoxication. But that's just how it goes.

MRR: We understand that Nitad has already played all over the fucking world. USA and Europe several times, Brazil. High points? Future goals? Are you keen to play at more German squat parties or what? Festivals? And what about Great Britain? And Japan?
Benis: The list of fun experiences but also painful incidents gained from touring can be made fucking extensive. But I thought the trips to USA and Brazil were the most fun so far. It was fucking 'rowdy.' German squat parties can be fucking hilarious, but the people at those parties can be very fucking sensitive when it comes to jokes, so playing at those places can result in problems. But otherwise it doesn't matter where we play. As long as we play and sound great, have a great fucking party and if there are fun/interesting people around us, then we could play a container for three people, as long as the van and the petrol is paid for. Future aims are foggy. We'll have to see; apparently Modde is going to start practicing for a 100-metres clog race at the World Championship now…
Benke: Future aim is to not have to deal with all that.

MRR: By the way, would you take this opportunity to discuss whether you're actually a punk band or whatever…
Benis: I don't know, my dear. No idea. We play punk and hardcore, but none of us have Mohicans or patches on our jeans. I love the idea of punk, to create chaos for a purpose. But you don't see much of that these days. And whether we have a purpose, who fucking knows? I think we just want to get drunk and play music that we like.
Benke: We are four individuals that play punk together. It is fun. Most of the time.

MRR: When Benis was drunk he told us that your vocalist is a postman and that he is an idiot with lots of issues. Develop!
Benis: Haha. Really? Did I say that? It is correct—he is a postman. But "an idiot with lots of issues," that sounds more like me. You must have got our bullshit mixed up.
Benke: I'm innocent!

MRR: Where do you fit in in the Swedish punk flora? Why aren't you on the *Turist i Tillvaron* compilations?
Benis: We don't fit in anywhere. The hardcore kids think that we are losers, and the punk kids think we are hipsters. But I hope that we do contribute somehow. There are too many shit bands in Sweden. Sometimes I think that some of them think it is more important to have the right type of amplifier than what is actually produced. But yeah, we usually have more fun at punk gigs than sneaker-hardcore gigs.
Benke: Sweden's punk scene today must be the worst it has been for years, at least if you're basing that on the article in the latest issue of *Close Up* magazine. What a fucking joke! Marko, why don't you write something about that for your zine? I don't want to fit in anywhere. But then again, I don't think we do either.

MRR: No but, you're from Sweden and you're not playing D-beat or traditional Swedish *råpunk*. Is it some sort of Big Black/SST records/Swans/late-period Black Flag or similar wank-genre fascination that's at the root of Nitad? Victims of a Bomb Raid? USHC? *What*?
Benis: You're exactly right.
Benke: Sort of all that you just mentioned and some other stuff.

MRR: Find five wrongs: Krunch, Tottis, Svart Parad, Crude SS, Raped Teenagers, Strebers, Nitad...
Benis: I think Crude SS is pure shit and Strebers feels more nostalgic than good. Raped Teenagers is one of Sweden's best bands of all times, but insanely underrated. The other bands are classics. I'd add Rövsvett, because they're just like Raped Teenagers, too underrated. I want to smash things up when I play *Jesus Var En Tomte* 7"
Benke: Nitad or Stre*beers*. You decide.

MRR: What do you think about body art? Motorcycles? Crime? Drugs? Beards? *MRR*? Truckstop Alaska?
Benis: Fuck, what an annoying question. Shut up! I like drugs and Truckstop Alaska. What *MRR* ever did for the underground scene is invaluable. Beard I do have. But it looks like Amish, so I am not sure if I like it or not.
Benke: I like all of it!

MRR: What's the best Swedish fanzine at the moment? And why does he (Marko) not solely write about *råpunk*?
Benis: I don't read any zines anymore, so I have no idea. Truthfully. Why Marko does or does not do stuff will forever be a mystery. I think he is a robot that is controlled by some cosmic being on another planet.
Benke: Good questions. Perhaps you can answer this, Tony? By the way, that's one hell of a criminal name, "Tony"…

MRR: Say something cool to end this interview in a way that it'll be really clichéd, like all punk band zine interviews!
Benis: After a massive drunken party I woke up in the morning and noticed I had pissed my pants. My girl was still asleep, so I rushed up and started making coffee, and then I pretended to fall and splash coffee all over the bed. Then it was just to change the sheets and there was no discussion about pissing in your sleep.
Benke: I feel very fucking cool now. Maybe I'll drink another beer.

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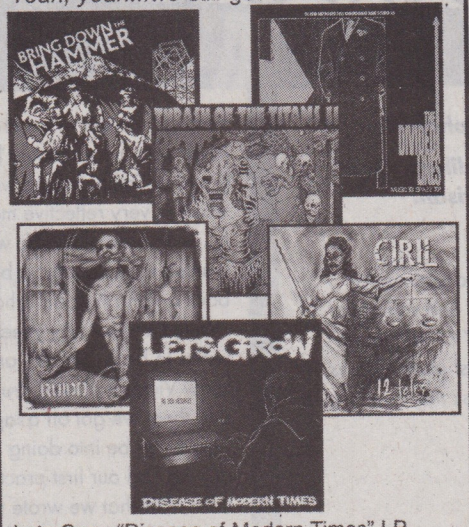

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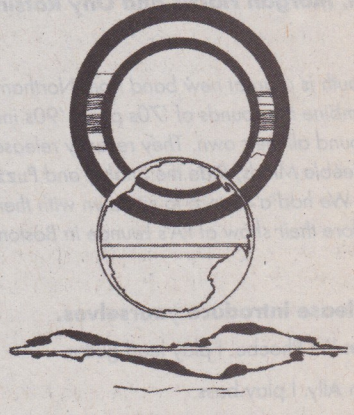

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POTTY MOUTH

Interview by Chris Strunk and Catherine Humphreville.

Photos by Chip Weems, Dan Jones, Marc Candilore, Max Kitchell, Morgan Harris and Ony Ratsimbaharison.

Potty Mouth is a great new band from Northampton, Massachusetts. They combine the sounds of '70s punk, '90s indie pop, and surf guitar into a sound all their own. They recently released a 12" EP that three labels (Feeble Minds, Ride the Snake, and Puzzle Pieces) joined forces to release. We had a chance to sit down with them and ask them some questions before their show at PA's Lounge in Boston.

MRR: Please introduce yourselves.

Phoebe: I'm Phoebe. I play lead guitar.

Ally: I'm Ally. I play bass.

Abby: Abby. I play rhythm guitar and lead vocals.

Victoria: I'm Victoria. I play drums.

MRR: So how did the band come together and how did you meet?

Ally: We've told it enough by now. Basically three out of four of us went to Smith or either still goes to Smith. In January of 2011, I had already graduated Smith the year before, but I had started working at Smith, and the department that I was working for puts on a retreat for seniors every year at this very nice retreat center in Connecticut. I convinced Phoebe to go with me so I could have a friend with me, because Phoebe was my friend at Smith. So she went and it was in the middle of nowhere, and it was this very reflective meditative space. It was snowing. It was beautiful. Blah blah blah. We were on my hotel bed talking about how we both wanted to really start a band together, and we started bouncing ideas back and forth about what that band would be. And Phoebe was like, "Well, I know Abby Weems (who we knew through friends of friends) wants to be in a band, and she plays guitar. We could ask her." And we knew Victoria played drums, and Victoria went to Smith. So right then and there we got on a laptop and messaged both of them and said, "Hey would you be into doing [this]," and they both said, "Yes." And that February we had our first practice at my house. We wrote "Drip-Dry," and then I think after that we wrote that first song and thought, "Oh, we can actually do this," and so we just kept doing it.

MRR: Did you have any idea of what it would sound like when you first got started? Did it turn out the way that you wanted it to?

Phoebe: We didn't have any specific plans for how we wanted it to sound. We had a few bands that we were thinking about that we liked.

Abby: I know Grass Widow was a big influence, just because we wanted to have multiple vocals at first. And so that's why on "Drip-Dry" we all have a bunch of harmonies. But then afterwards we figured out that some songs were harder to sing while playing.

Phoebe: We just kind of hit our stride and figured out how we make mu-

sic together and just kind of went with it. From there it just kind of evolved into our own sound.

Ally: But we never went into it saying we want to be this kind of band, or we want to do this thing. We never wanted to reach for a particular thing. We just kind of started intuitively writing different parts together and piecing them together, and then, like Phoebe said, we just kind of hit our stride and found a more consistent sound.

MRR: How would you describe your music?

Abby: I always say clean, surfy punk.

Phoebe: It's hard. Everybody has described our band in different ways. I like a lot of the descriptions I hear, but I don't really know how to describe it myself.

Abby: Nothing ever really clicks perfectly for descriptions or comparisons really. I know we've been compared to the Buzzcocks a lot lately, and I can hear that, but just in the way they have a lot of lead guitar parts, but not really in the sound.

MRR: I can see that, too. I'd be so happy if someone said my band sounded like the Buzzcocks.

Ally: Personally, my thing is kind of straight up '77 punk, so that's what I would love for people to hear in our sound, but at the same time, it's not the thing that we're striving for.

MRR: Where was the first Potty Mouth show? What was it like?

Phoebe: Well, actually our name used to be Vacation. We had our first show at this house in Holyoke called the Row House. They have shows there.

Abby: We played five or six songs maybe. It was really short, and we were all really nervous. And it kind of sucked because we wanted our friend Mark to see us, but he was working really late, so we asked if we could play last maybe, and it was our first show ever, and so some of the bands were sort of grumpy about that, which was really intimidating.

Phoebe: And the cops came.

Ally: And the power went off. The cops came and someone pulled the plug, and suddenly all of the power was off.

Phoebe: So in the middle the power just went out

Abby: It was kind of a nerve-racking first set.

Ally: That was in May of 2011, and the reason why that happened is because Victoria was about to leave for the summer because she is from South Carolina and she spends her summers there. And we were just like, "We gotta play a local show before we can't do this again for another four months." So we just threw it together so that we could play somehow and basically disbanded for that entire summer and communicated about the band and stuff via facebook, but we actually couldn't practice because we didn't have Victoria. But then once we reconvened again, once Victoria was back in the area for school in September, it was like riding a bike. We somehow remembered everything we did before and were able to say, "No actually that song's kind of shitty. Let's ditch that one. Never play that again."

Abby: "Vacation Gone Bad."

Ally: And also let's change our name because there's another band called Vacation.

MRR: Vacation is a good name. Do you think that living in Western Mass affects Potty Mouth? What is the scene like there? Would you sound the way you were if you weren't in Western Mass?

Abby: I don't know if we would sound any different, but I think being in Western Mass—it's such a supportive environment, just having Smith right there. So many people are so interested in an all-girl band. There are other all-girl bands in the area. It's just a really good environment. When we went on tour there were other places where Phoebe and I got harassed on the street just for being girls, and in Western Mass it's completely different. Everyone really loves the girl thing.

MRR: Where were the places you were harassed?

Phoebe: Columbus, which is weird because we had an awesome show, and there are a lot of really great people there. But, y' know, you get harassed anywhere you go. It's normal.

Ally: The thing about Western Mass, also, is that I don't think I've ever read a description of a non-straight-up hardcore punk band that hasn't been described as Dinosaur Jr.. That's just always the default band. Every indie rock-influenced band.

Everyone: Or Sonic Youth. There's a big shadow.

Ally: Any time there's a write up, it's something like, "Obviously this band must be influenced by Dinosaur Jr. because they're from Western Mass." Actually it doesn't work that way. We see J Mascis around. I love Dinosaur Jr..

Phoebe: We all do.

Ally: I personally didn't start listening to Dinosaur Jr. until I moved to Western Mass, but I don't think we sound anything like them.

Abby: I grew up in Western Mass and I never even listened to Dinosaur Jr. or Sonic Youth until a couple of years ago when I met Coco Moore through school friends. I didn't have a clue who her parents were, and so I don't feel the influence at all. It's just funny.

Phoebe: I wanna know, for Victoria, what's the difference between playing in Western Mass and playing in the south? Is it a big difference in community or is it the same?

Victoria: It's definitely a lot bigger. A lot more people are interested in this type of music in Western Mass and in the Northeast in general. A lot more punk. There's just not much of it down south. Or there is, but it's only in certain pockets.

MRR: Are you from Columbia?

Victoria: Yeah.

MRR: There used to be shows there in the '90s, but then people booking tours realized not to even bother.

Victoria: Yeah, we definitely hear a lot of that.

MRR: But there are bands there?

Victoria: We (Victoria's other band, Chemical Peel) end up planning with bands that we wouldn't really play with otherwise, just because it's so small genre-wise.

MRR: I was in Columbia for a week recording.

Ally: We're going on tour in the south this January and we're definitely going to stop in Columbia. The three of us who've never been there before will really get to experience it.

MRR: Well, this is Catherine's question. From afar, Potty Mouth evokes the phrase, "punk rock dream come true." To an outsider it seems like an awesome band where everyone is supportive of each other and gets along?

Abby: Why do we get along? Is that the question?

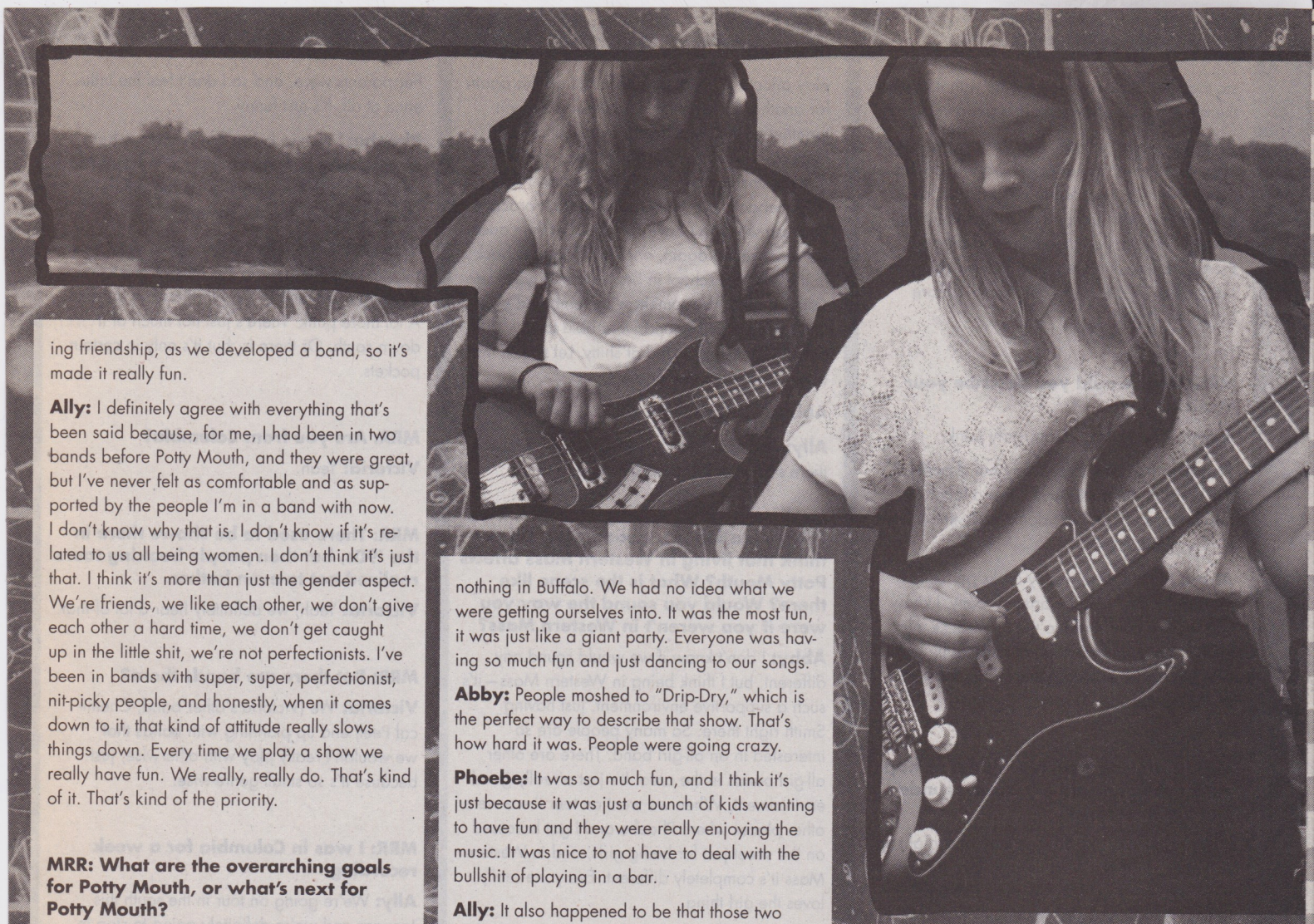
Ally: That's funny. I'm glad we give off that vibe.

Phoebe: It kind of is a punk rock dream! It's awesome!

Ally: It really is.

Phoebe: I didn't know how to play guitar before being in this band, and to me, that is a punk rock dream. Picking up an instrument and just starting to play it in a really supportive group of people. We just click really well musically. Also, on a friendship level we get along really well. It's good.

Abby: Maybe because you guys went to school together, you know each other really. I know for me, I get along with you guys really well because I didn't know you at all when we started the band. So it's more been a develop-



ing friendship, as we developed a band, so it's made it really fun.

Ally: I definitely agree with everything that's been said because, for me, I had been in two bands before Potty Mouth, and they were great, but I've never felt as comfortable and as supported by the people I'm in a band with now. I don't know why that is. I don't know if it's related to us all being women. I don't think it's just that. I think it's more than just the gender aspect. We're friends, we like each other, we don't give each other a hard time, we don't get caught up in the little shit, we're not perfectionists. I've been in bands with super, super, perfectionist, nit-picky people, and honestly, when it comes down to it, that kind of attitude really slows things down. Every time we play a show we really have fun. We really, really do. That's kind of it. That's kind of the priority.

MRR: What are the overarching goals for Potty Mouth, or what's next for Potty Mouth?

Phoebe: We're gonna go on tour in the winter for two weeks, go down south. We're hoping to put out another record in the spring. Or record the new songs for a full-length.

Ally: We've been building up songs for a full-length, so that's the goal, and hopefully record it by this winter so it can be out by next spring.

MRR: Any favorite tour stories? Favorite shows? Wacky incidents?

All: Yes! Yes!

Abby: This might take a while.

Ally: Hopefully none of these people read MRR.

Abby: Should we tell Toronto? Maybe those people will come back for us?

Phoebe: For me, I don't know, you might agree with me on this, I think the most fun I had on tour was in Columbus and Buffalo.

Ally: Definitely Buffalo, which was a huge surprise.

Phoebe: We were so excited for our New York and Philadelphia shows because we've played both of those places before, and we have a lot of friends there. We were expecting a lot in those shows. And then we expected absolutely nothing in Buffalo. We had no idea what we were getting ourselves into. It was the most fun, it was just like a giant party. Everyone was having so much fun and just dancing to our songs.

Abby: People moshed to "Drip-Dry," which is the perfect way to describe that show. That's how hard it was. People were going crazy.

Phoebe: It was so much fun, and I think it's just because it was just a bunch of kids wanting to have fun and they were really enjoying the music. It was nice to not have to deal with the bullshit of playing in a bar.

Ally: It also happened to be that those two shows were both basement shows, which are always the best, and the preferred venue for us.

Abby: People also bought a ton of stuff. Usually when you're in a bar, people have money on them because they're buying drinks so they're more likely to buy merch; whereas at a show in a house, people are just running in and out of the house. I don't know if you guys have noticed the difference, but people bought so much stuf, and people were buying records which were eight dollars, and then they'd give us a ten and be like, "Keep it." It was awesome. It was happening so much.

Phoebe: We've had some really fun bar shows, too, but it was just a really nice moment for us on tour. We just had a fun party. It was awesome.

Ally: I just thought of a funny tour story. Our worst show was in Berkeley, Michigan, which is right outside of Detroit. We just ended up...

Abby: You don't think Philadelphia was worse?

Ally: I don't want to get into it. That was worse for different reasons. Berkeley was just the wrong show for us. It was with some rockabilly band, but actually those dudes were just jocks.

Abby: I thought they were good; I just didn't enjoy them throwing up on the stage.

Phoebe: They were pounding beers.

Ally: So basically the guitarist threw up on stage in the most unfunny way. He was trying to do it. He had the bucket under the stage in preparation for him to puke into it. And so that happened. This was also the guy that we were maybe supposed to stay with. So that was the one night of tour we thought, "Fuck that; we're getting a motel." We ended up getting a motel room at the Red Roof Inn in Berkeley, Michigan. Our next show was in Canada, so we had to kill this $10 plastic handle of vodka before we crossed the border to Canada. So here we are in this Red Roof Inn...

Phoebe: We had to.

Ally: So we finished that off at the Red Roof Inn in Berkeley. And the next day, we were still trying to get all of our ducks in a row to cross the border into Canada. We ended up somehow in the parking lot of a Home Depot counting all of our merch out in the van because we wanted to make sure we had an exact number, so they didn't try to tax us or anything like that. We were going to go to Kinko's to print out an official border document, so we're in the parking lot of the Home Depot counting out all the records. A guy walks by, he kind of looks like Eminem...

Abby: No, he didn't look like Eminem. He

looked like that guy from...

Phoebe: Breaking Bad.

Abby: No, from that show Ridiculousness. Rob Durdick.

Phoebe: No, it's Dyrdek.

Abby: OK, Rob Dyrdek, the guy from Ridiculousness. Do you know that show? It's like a really bad version of America's Funniest Home Videos. He's the host. He's like this weird white gangster kinda guy.

Phoebe: He's a skateboarder, guys!

Ally: This very, very Detroit guy found us in the parking lot of Home Depot, saw us counting the records, and said, "Yo, what's up? I'm a three-time Emmy-award-winning record producer. My name is Mike Williams. What records you got there? What band are you in?"

Phoebe: We all thought he was pulling our leg.

Ally: We thought he was full of shit. What do you mean Emmy-award-winning record producer? Emmys are for TV. What do you produce, TV soundtracks?

Phoebe: We didn't think about that until later.

Ally: But Phoebe immediately was like, "This guy's full of shit." So he whips out his iphone, and sure enough, there's a photo already on there with him standing in front of his three Emmys. That's like his background on his phone. And so we're like, "Oh OK." So I totally saw it as an opportunity to sell a record, make another $8. So I was like, "Oh cool, do you want to buy a record?" And he was like, "Yeah yeah, sure yeah. I'll buy a record." And he just bought one. And that was it. So we sold a record to a guy who claims he's a three-time-Emmy-award-winning record producer from Detroit.

Phoebe: We have yet to hear from him.

MRR: That was going to be my next question. In the Boston Phoenix article, you said you're not a political band. Why or why not?

Phoebe: Just our content isn't political. Our lyrics aren't really political.

Abby: Our only political song I guess is "Girls XL." I write most of the lyrics, and when I'm writing, I just try to write in a way that can appeal to anybody, and they can apply the song to whatever situation they want to. "Girls XL" we all wrote together, and it was just because Ally got a really bad letter from somebody, and so we were just really pissed off and thought, "Don't put us down. What the fuck?"

Ally: It was a reaction.

Abby: "Girls XL" is not at all about empowering women and us being influenced by the Western Mass women culture or anything. It was just because we were pissed off. Other girls probably feel pissed off about something.

Phoebe: I wouldn't say it's not at all about that, because I feel like everything I do and everything I think about is related to that. I went to Smith and I'm definitely a feminist. I feel like everybody should be a feminist. That kind of thing is engrained in everything I do, so yeah. We're not a Riot Grrrl band because we don't write songs specifically about...

Abby: Women empowerment.

Phoebe: Being women.

Ally: In the same way we're not striving to fit a certain genre category, we're not striving to project a certain type of political message. We all have our personal politics. I feel very strongly about feminist issues, gender in punk, women in punk. It's very much a passion of mine, and that's why "Girls XL" was a reaction I had to what I thought was a message from a guy...It felt like he was asking us to apologize for doing something that we like to do, having fun and being in a band and self-promoting and playing shows. I don't think any of that's bad, so that was that. I also don't want to be like, "We're not a Riot Grrrl band because we don't want to be associated with that because that's yucky." No, I love Riot Grrrl. I love it. It's great.

Phoebe: I grew up with it. It's really, really important to me. Honestly, I don't know if I would have started playing music if it wasn't for Riot Grrrl, so it's really important.

Ally: It's just trying to negotiate the tension. We also don't want to automatically be labeled as Riot Grrrl just because we're a band of all women. That's an annoying conflation. So it's just wanting to be clear about it. This is our songwriting process. This is what we're doing. We're not saying we're not Riot Grrrl because we're defensive or anything. It's just a fact.

MRR: What would Potty Mouth be like playing in an elementary school?

Phoebe: Well I'm glad you asked that. I used to be a preschool teacher and it was so funny because just as Potty Mouth was picking up, one of my coworkers (he's this really nice older guy and he's really into teaching the kids music) he continuously asked me many times to have Potty Mouth come play at the preschool. All of my coworkers and my boss asked me. "Oh, you're in a band? What's your band's name?" Working at a preschool, I felt ridiculous saying, "Um... Potty Mouth." I didn't want to tell any of the kids that that was my band name. It was just so silly. Sort of a weird awkward experience, but I never did play music there. It just didn't feel like the right place. But an elementary school might be a little bit different. I mean preschool is a lot younger.

Ally: I feel like "Dog Song" and "Kids" could

very much have a kid appeal. I just sold a Potty Mouth t-shirt to my boss so she could give it to her seven-year-old son. I said, "Just tell him to listen to "Dog Song" and "Kids" especially"—it's all about not wanting to grow up.

MRR: There may be a future in children's music for you. From what I understand it's pretty lucrative.

Ally: Yeah, the new Raffi.

Abby: Well, we want to try to get "Dog Song" in a dog food commercial, but it's on a public domain thing now so...

MRR: I'm a children's librarian and I went to the children's librarian meeting the other day. I was carrying giant boxes of records to take to the post office after our meeting and one of them, which had come back from the pressing plant, had the Potty Mouth sticker on the side, and one of the children's librarians said, "Oh, what did you bring for us? Is that a box of new children's books?"

Abby: My mom is a librarian too and she keeps asking me, "Why don't you have CDs so we can put it in the library?" She also asked me if she can put a record in the library, and I said, "Mom, it doesn't work that way."

Phoebe: You could probably put a record in a library.

Abby: But it'd get scratched up.

MRR: Before CDs, they had record collections. What are your favorite records of 2012?

Phoebe: Ours.

Ally: This is too much pressure.

Abby: What even came out this year?

MRR: It doesn't have to be 2012. Maybe favorite newer records?

Victoria: One thing that I've really been into is the Joint Damage record Strike Gently. They're from Charlotte.

MRR: Any final comments?

Victoria: Potty Mouth is actually going on tour with Chemical Peel (Victoria's other band) again in January.

Abby: Which is awesome because as I think I said in our Boston Phoenix article, going on tour with Chemical Peel was like a traveling slumber party. It was so much fun.

Phoebe: It was like the perfect group of people.

Ally: If people think Potty Mouth exudes a fun, supportive energy...the two bands together are just perfect.

Abby: It's an overload of fun.

Ally: One thing about our tour. Before we went on tour, I had this vision of doing a pyramid because collectively we are three guitarists, two bassists and a single drummer. And so I had this idea of a pyramid. At first it was just a photoshop thing in my mind... "Oh, we'll take the faces of the three guitarists and it'll be the bottom, the two bassists will be in the middle, and then Victoria will just be on top," but then we just started doing human pyramids in every city that we went to on tour and it was a really funny thing, you know, "Oh, gotta do a pyramid."

Phoebe: Yeah it was like a challenge to us. Sometimes we had to wait on the street and be like, "Excuse me, will you take our photo as a human pyramid in the middle of the street? Thanks."

MRR: How did you end up playing on WFMU radio and how was that?

Phoebe: We're friends with Reed and he does a show on it, so he asked us to do a set there. And it was really, really fun.

Abby: It sounded good.

MRR: It did sound good.

Phoebe: It was a lot of fun. We ate donuts and had coffee.

Ally: But the van broke down as we were pulling up to the station. We were double parked in front of the station and the van just died.

Abby: So that was the one mishap.

Phoebe: But it's OK. We got it fixed.

Abby: (to Victoria) Do you think the drumming lessons that you're taking now will change your style at all for Potty Mouth?

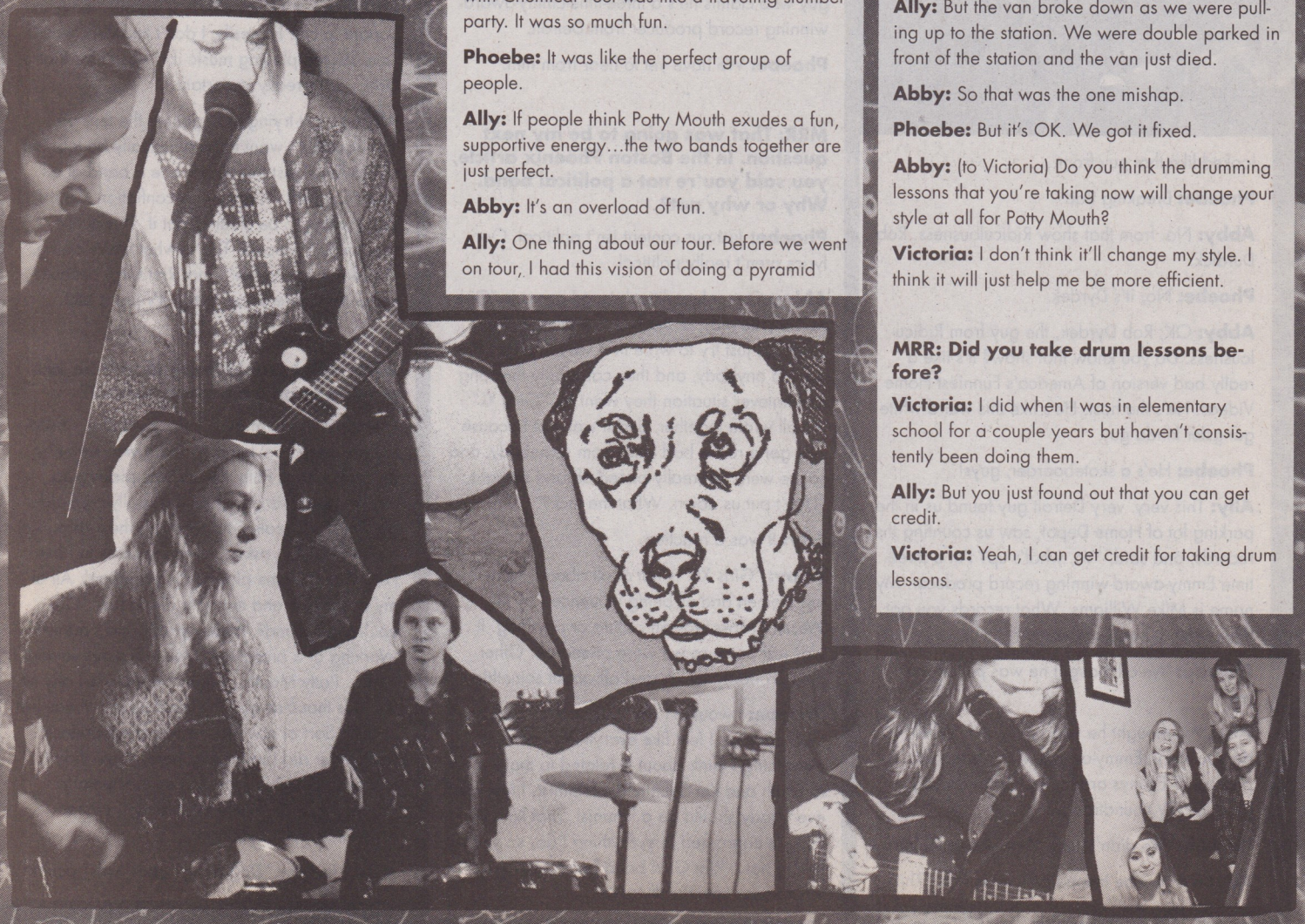
Victoria: I don't think it'll change my style. I think it will just help me be more efficient.

MRR: Did you take drum lessons before?

Victoria: I did when I was in elementary school for a couple years but haven't consistently been doing them.

Ally: But you just found out that you can get credit.

Victoria: Yeah, I can get credit for taking drum lessons.



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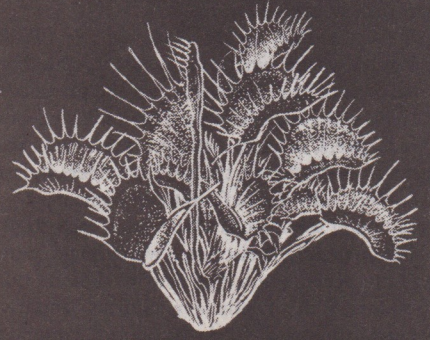

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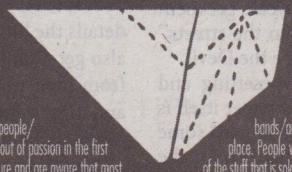

We like to meet people/ bands/art/sport/etc. that do what they do out of passion in the first place. People who believe in a underground culture and are aware that most of the stuff that is sold nowadays under that flag is total crap only made to make money. And, if you feel you can write and relate, get in touch. To put it with Fugazi's words:

"NEVER MIND WHAT THEY'RE SELLING- IT'S WHAT YOU ARE BUYING"

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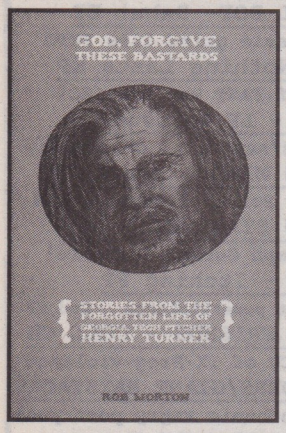

God, Forgive These Bastards: Stories from the Forgotten Life of Georgia Tech Pitcher Henry Turner
Rob Morton
94 pages • $7.95
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Well, this is a curious item. A slight book—less than a hundred pages—of stories told by Henry Turner, a Portland homeless guy, as remembered by someone who met him at a bus stop. The book's author, Rob Morton, stays in sporadic touch over the next few years "spending a few hours with him, if for no other reason than to listen to his unbelievable stories."

Sure, people can tell some tall tales to interested youngsters. Rather than paraphrase I'm going to quote further from the intro and Morton's explanation of his obsession:

What follows is an amalgamation of the stories Henry told me, as best as I can remember them. I hope I did him justice. There are some embellishments and I took quite a few liberties, but like all good narrators, Henry knew that any story worth telling should be grand, significant, and a little bit false. It's important to note that Henry was no hero, and I'm not trying to romanticize or defend him—as you'll find out, he was a murderer, an abusive husband, an unapologetic addict, and a crook who was haunted by his most awful moments. But he was also at times a tender, love father, a brave adventurer, and an amazing pitcher, who was surprisingly candid and an absolute charm to listen to. No person can be summed up by their worst actions. And despite his insistence that "forgiveness ain't an inherent human quality", that's what this whole thing's been about for me: the capacity to forgive someone's most wretched moments.

What follows are eight chapters told in the first person. I did read this entire book with an open mind. Let me say that before things get harsh. That Morton is attempting Turner's voice is weird enough. But his take on Georgia vernacular is painful. The stories are much like the strangers that approach you at public libraries, cafes, and bars, and want to tell you how they got this way. How many of us would listen? How many of us would write a book about it?

But let's continue. Turner was a baseball pitcher for Georgia Tech. Sure, sports can be a great metaphor for the triumph and agonies of life. The chapter on how Turner attempts to pitch a no-hitter while on meth is a good yarn. Morton paces it well. Turner wrecking his shoulder in hopes of getting noticed by a talent scout is a weeper.

Next though is a story about going to Athens with a small-time coke dealer. "You ever been to Athens on Halloween? Those University of Georgia girls get crazy as hell, and I'll tell you this right now, you and me are gonna make 'em even crazier!" Which leads to a marriage, a murder over her infidelity and Turner kicking his wife at a Waffle House.

Then, without much explanation, the next chapter picks up in Ohio where we meet a serial killer who "would invite addicts over for some tweak, get them high, and them choke them before they could wander back onto the streets." Next Turner bites the ear off a guy in a business suit who might be the Devil.

As a physical object the book is equally troubled. The typesetting and proofreading needs work, too. Odd line breaks. Misspellings. The paper itself is nice, as are the colors. The margins, particularly the gutters, could've used some breathing room. And the South is capitalized when used as a stand-in for the entire region here. I had a hard time getting past these structural problems. Help the readers out!

The chapters start with quotes to place the narrative in a larger, more complex reading than the 94 pages allow. I see what Morton is going for here—people are complex, life is fragile and fleeting. Who would argue against that? But to make a book about it? Suspect. The scene at the bus stop (from the intro) is re-introduced in the last chapter. By now we're supposed to recognize Turner, who hands out scammed bus passes, as "the bane of all business men, the bus pass angel, and a man you could count on for a damn good story."

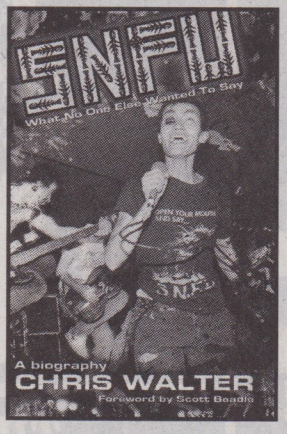
Oof. It's just too much. It's a fucking afterschool special—down to the narrator now vowing to take on the role of his troubled (but good-hearted) mentor. To say nothing of how this book does nothing to address punk's complicated relationship to homelessness. I don't want to degrade Morton's obvious admiration for Turner, or his attempts at forgiveness. And there may be readers out there who are psyched on this sort of novella.

Let's ask the tough questions—Are these stories worth repeating? Why? In whose voice and for whose profit? Do the publishers really think this book shows "the brief moments that can shape or [sic] lives and the power of forgiving even the most wretched actions with compassion and understanding"?

Factor also that Cantankerous Titles is Joe Biel's new imprint after Microcosm. Of the reinvention he says, "So I would like to challenge people to take on the Revenge of Print challenge but also accept the responsible journalism challenge. Tell the stories of the world around you and explain how complex the world really is." I like that challenge. That this book is based around someone on the fringes of society (or that the few encounters with him impressed a punk) isn't enough to meet those challenges. And of complexities, I'd prefer that Biel and Microcosm Publishing continue dealing with the unresolved charges of emotional abuses and manipulation. I write this in hopes that the process of accountability and healing will continue rather than just changing corporate names.

I did not get a copy of the "jazz punk" album that accompanies the book so I can't speak to that part. If Cantankerous really wants to honor the memory of the late Henry Turner maybe they should offer the profits of the book to his daughter instead of puffing up their own self-importance. Sorry, dudes.

—Travis Fristoe



SNFU: What No One Else Wanted to Say
Chris Walter
267 pages • $15.50
www.punkbooks.com

GoFuckYourself Press issues another thorough and reverent biography of a relatively obscure Canadian band. Sure, most fans of underground music know about SNFU and are aware of how influential, groundbreaking and just plain good they are. But despite the band's thirty-year history—twenty of which have been spent touring and/or recording almost constantly—SNFU are still relatively unknown to the world at large. That is what makes their tireless struggle, perseverance and ever-changing cast of characters such an inspired read.

Not to be compared to the *Open Your Mouth And Say...Mr Chi Pig* documentary about SNFU's legendary and enigmatic frontman, this book details the life of the band as well as all of its 21 members, past and present. We also get a multi-angle look at SNFU's successes, failures, trials and tribulations from their promoters, label-heads, peers, roadies, managers, punk luminaries and most importantly from themselves—including the band's founders and riff-masters, the Belke brothers, who were sadly absent from the documentary.

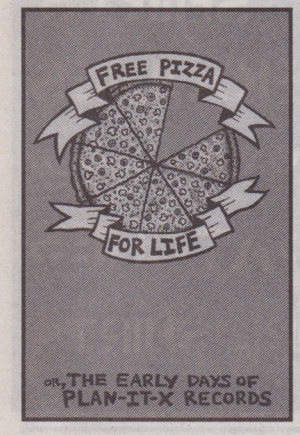
Keeping with the band's tradition of seven-word album titles, each chapter of the book (and, indeed, the book's own title) is also seven words long, a minor example of the sort of insight and respect the author gives to his subject. Along his way through SNFU's deep history, Walter continually unearths band trivia that will sate any fan, be they fair-weather or diehard. Of course the origins of the band name and iconic t-shirt image are explained, but so are the stories behind classic songs like "Bodies In The Wall," "Snapping Turtle," "Cockatoo

Quill" and many more.

To illustrate the density of this book, here are highlights from pages 66 and 67: the band tours the east coast where they fight skinheads in Gainesville, move north to North Carolina to sing backup vocals on Corrosion Of Conformity's *Technocracy,* then wind up in Philadelphia where Andy Warhol secures a box seat to watch them (before whisking Chi Pig off for a photo shoot). That is just two pages of a 267 page book!

Today the only original member of the band is, not-surprisingly, their brilliant, albeit troubled, vocalist/lyricist. His constant and undying attachment to the band plays out in fascinating but tragic ways. While once the most agile man in punk he is now on the backside of drug abuse and mental health issues. But his wit is still intact and his recollections of tours, always-shifting band dynamics and the people who helped/hurt SNFU along their way is impressively clear. Even though we have Wikipedia, YouTube, archived zines and Google image searches this book goes far beyond those mediums to painstakingly catalog, collect and ultimately share a definitive SNFU history.

—Craigums



Free Pizza for Life:
Or, The Early Days of Plan-It-X Records
Chris Clavin
224 pages • $10
Secret Sailor Books & Plan-it-x Records
www.plan-it-x.com

At some point I got really sucked into reading musician's autobiographies, and not just from the Lemmy Kilmister's of the world, but, quite frankly, I'm a person who has even been looking for a copy of *Behind the Paint: the autobiography of Insane Clown Posse's Violent J* for way longer than I should feel comfortable admitting (it is apparently a collector's item—but why?!). I don't know if you guys read a bunch of crap like that too, but you probably already know that in this medium people can represent/misrepresent themselves as they see fit. Of course most of the books are probably full of, at best, stretches and, more likely, lies, and are definitely the equivalent of reading *US Weekly*, but I just need to know what they say anyway. Give me the rock'n'roll mythology!

If you're reading some real rock star shit you will take their influences and sex-capades really lightly too. Like how I'm pretty willing to believe that Keith Richards was telling the complete truth about curing his own Hepatitis C or that anyone at all would've been willing to sleep with a member of Mötley Crüe, and let's face it, it'd probably even be a stretch just to tell myself that most of these people wrote the goddamned books their names are on.

Free Pizza For Life manages to not read like an exaggeration though. With its first-tour stories, pizza scams and anecdotes like snagging a really cool Jane's Addiction poster one time, the book feels open and innocent. It's like if a fifteen-year-old were allowed to write a memoir prior to becoming super scene-jaded and forever unimpressed.

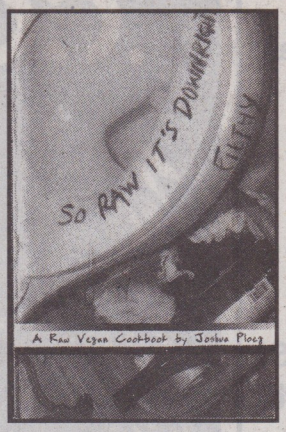
The other, more engrossing part of the story is about Chris Clavin and Samantha Dorsett becoming friends and punks and eventually starting their record label, but although the title of the book is technically: *Free Pizza for Life, or The Early Days of Plan-It-X Records*, the actual Plan-It-X content here is, on the whole, pretty minimal. As my roommate Caitlin said, "It's like renaming the Diary of Anne Frank: The Story of World War II."

I am definitely unaccustomed to reading really memoir-ish autobiographies written by current punk people. I feel too close to the opinions and influences. So when considering this book as another contribution to rock'n'roll mythology, I found myself being more of a scoffer than I am ordinarily. Like, chock full of judgment in certain places. I can read Brian Wilson of Beach Boys fame speculating about the genius of Phil Spector in an entirely different way than I am able to read about the ramifications of a peer never having discovered Glenn Danzig, you know?

So if you're thinking this book is going to be more like a *Cometbus*-y, *Burn Collector*-ish thing and less like *Kiss and Make-up* by Gene Simmons, that wouldn't be totally accurate. What you're going to get is less a story *written by* Chris Clavin and more the story *of* Chris Clavin, if that makes any sense.

It's honestly a book that is going to be important to a couple of different groups of people, like friends of Samantha Dorsett, punk historians, people who now or in the past ever really cared about Plan-it X records and those who are so DIY that they want to correct all of the typos in their books themselves with the help of some bourgeois editor.

—Jesska Hughes



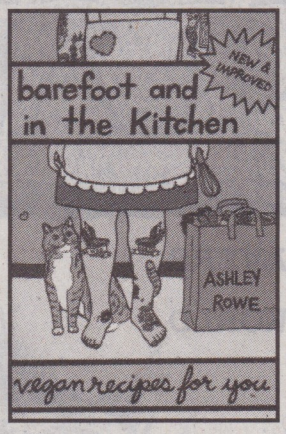
So Raw it's Downright Filthy : A Raw Vegan Cookbook
Joshua Ploeg
61 pages • $5.95
Cantankerous Titles
www.cantankeroustitles.com

This tongue in cheek zine was written in a DIY fashion as a total middle finger to all the expensive Raw, Vegan, Yupster, gentrifying, restaurants overcharging for blended cashew butter smoothies and plated salads, which to me is the antithesis of the message that is always conveyed in Josh's work: good, clean, extremely flavorful food, done on the cheap, that happens to be vegan.

I have been a huge fan of Josh's food and writings. When I became vegan years ago he inspired me and gave me hope that I too, as a crazy punk kid, could delve into the world of Chef-ry by doing things my own way. Eventually when we both lived in L.A. we had plans to do pop-up dinners together (someday!).

So suffice to say, I am a little biased when it comes to talking about Josh's food. Do yourself a favor—get yo' ass up, get this booklet and create these delicious recipes. Don't be discouraged by the seemingly long list of ingredients on each page, because once you start to read the instructions the preparation is easily doable with a little knife-work. No expensive dehydrator or VitaMix Blender is needed to create these dishes, which is in stark contrast to the requirements in many RAW "cookbooks." The vegetables and spices are easily obtainable at any grocery store and reflect a worldly view of food culture. I am highly impressed with the depth that these recipes have and Josh makes the flow so effortless from one flavorful ingredient to the next. Sweet and savory mash-ups paired alongside tart yet creamy sauces. Chili peppers paired with fruit and smoky curry powder paired with purposefully under-ripe mangoes. These are some of the simple yet bold flavor profiles that make you think twice, but try them out and you will be surprisingly pleased. Some of my favorite recipes include: Saffron Banana Tarts with Ginger Cream, Pho', Sambal paste, Orange Kale and Blackberry Chili Salad.

—Danielle Gresham



Barefoot in the Kitchen
Ashley Rowe
95 Pages • $8.95
Microcosm Publishing
Microcosmpublishing.com
www.akpress.com

Ashley is also the co-owner of Fat Bottom Bakery located in Oakland, CA, which continues to stay true to DIY ethics by tabling at local events including shows. For a book that started out as a little self-published zine and has grown into a full-fledged book, I commend you Ashley! The intro begins with a few (not so) common sense tips if you are first time cook, but these tips can also help the not so green cook more efficiently. The recipes are not by any means difficult and while some are more inventive than others, all of them are true to her simple yet comforting style that makes "Barefoot" unique and personal. This book has just the right enough of healthy fat, sprinkled with musings of how the recipes developed and topped off with quirky fun drawings from rainbow brussel sprouts to nutritional yeast cats. I love how she had her friends contribute their favorite recipes towards the end of the book, showing how (this may sound cheesy) love, friendship and culture are shared through food. Two of my favorite recipes in here include the Butternut Squash Macaroni and the Apple Cinnamon Beer Bread.

—Danielle Gresham

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MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

As the President of the Punk Rock Film Critics Association™, it is that time of the year when I release our list of best films of 2012 basically because everybody else is doing it. I hate to be excluded from list making. Elsewhere in this issue of *Maximum Rocknroll* the shitworkers are listing their favorite records of 2012 so why not join in on the fun?

Here is the list of the Punk Rock Film Critics Association™ best films of 2012.

THE NORMALS – "Vacation To Nowhere" CD reissue Bonus DVD – Live at The New Place, Metairie, Louisiana, April 26, 1980

This is an amazing live performance of the Normals that was found at a garage sale. The camera work is lacking at first with an extended static shot focusing on bass player Steve Walters, but once the cameraperson gets into it, the viewer does too. You may have as much fun as the pogoing guy in the blue shirt up front. Great sound and good film quality. Unfortunately, they don't perform "Almost Ready." (www.lastlaugh.us)

THE SOURCE

A documentary about the Los Angeles based '70s cult the Source Family. The film benefits from the family being obsessive chroniclers of their daily activities. Everything that is mentioned can be shown or heard through films, photographs and audio recordings. Although the type of personality who joins or even leads a cult is very foreign to me, it is nonetheless fascinating to hear about. I became so obsessed with the Source Family after this film that I immediately read the book the film is based on, Steve Allen's *Beloved Son: A Story of the Jesus Cults* and every other bit of information I could find on The Source and related cults. Too many questions were left unanswered. I needed (and still need) to know more. (www.thesourcedoc.com)

SOUND OF NOISE

An avant-garde drummer sets out to perform a piece "Music For One City and Six Drummers" written by her friend. They collect a group of various styled, but overly competitive drummers to perform it. The drummers perform in a hospital, at a bank, outside the symphony hall and while dangling from electrical wires. They are pursued by a tone-deaf police officer whose brother is a famous conductor. The officer hates music, but while trying to stop the musicians he gets caught up in their performances. (www.magpictures.com/soundofnoise)

NAPOLEON

A screening that will probably never happen again. The first and only film shot of a six film series about the life of French Emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte by director Abel Gance. The film is five and a half hours long and was accompanied by the Oakland East Bay Symphony. The 1927 film covers Napoleon's childhood through his rise through the ranks of the French military. The film is known for utilizing innovative filming techniques—most famously the use of Polyvision, which extends the film to three screens simultaneously. My favorite scene is when Napoleon returns to the Convention where he was given command of the Army of Italy. The ghosts of preceding revolutionaries appear to him and declare he is the one to lead the revolution. It is over the top and forecasts the type of self-delusion for which Napoleon would later be known. However seeing only the early years of his life Napoleon seems almost sympathetic and humble. (silent film.org/napoleon)

PUNK BRITANNIA

A three part series from the BBC focusing on the birth and death of British punk. One hour is given to each **Pre-Punk 1972-76**, **Punk 1976-78** and **Post-Punk 1978-81**. Although three hours is hardly enough time to fully capture '70s punk, the documentary does a good job relaying the general feeling of punk. Johnny Rotten gets an overabundance of focus throughout all three parts, but punks well known and obscure get a chance to voice their opinions including the comment by Pop Group's Mark Stewart that punk is, "not some old, fat fart lecturing you about punk on fucking BBC4." (www.bbd.co.uk)

FREAKS IN LOVE

FREAKS IN LOVE is an atypical documentary in that the band Alice Donut never succumbs to any of the clichés of the rock'n'roll lifestyle. Although band infighting, drug use, major label problems and whatnot usually provide interesting documentary fodder, Alice Donut's story remains interesting without. This is the story of a bunch of friends playing music together for the right reasons with a moderate amount of success. They obviously didn't need the other bullshit, so why should we? (www.freaksinlove.com)

LAST DAYS HERE

The frustrating, engrossing and ultimately surprising story of Pentagram singer Bobby Liebling. Liebling is a 53-year-old junkie, living with his parents, who still maintains the delusion that he can make a musical comeback. This is propelled by his manager Sean Pelletier, his parents and of course his fans. The biggest problem is Liebling himself who is given every opportunity to make this comeback, but seems to lack the drive, foresight and humility to get the thing done. (www.ifcfilms.com/films/last-days-here)

CIRCLE JERKS: MY CAREER AS A JERK

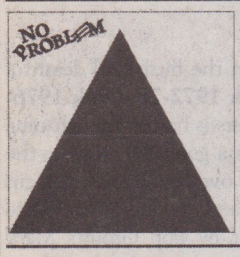
The choice of the word "career" in the title of this documentary gives a lot of insight into the minds of the guys in the Circle Jerks. They had an exceptionally long career for a punk band on what seems like little inspiration. The reason I include **CIRCLE JERKS: MY CAREER AS A JERK** on this list is for its honesty. Singer Keith Morris's insights into the songwriting approach of the band should make even the biggest fan question her/his fandom. This film may cause other bands to be more cautious when appearing in documentaries, but I find the outright honesty refreshing. I'd rather know the truth. (www.mvdvisual.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

SABERTOOTH

SABERTOOTH
"MORNING BREATH" 7"

Seriously damaged, raw pop punk, not unlike early Lifetime, Tiltwheel or Unfun. 300 pressed.



NO PROBLEM
"LIVING IN THE VOID" 7"

Following up their LP on Deranged with this new rager that combines the raw-as-fuck hardcore of that LP with the get-out-my-brain hooks of the earlier 7"s. First 100 on red, almost gone!

DEBT OFFENSIVE RECS
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debtoffensiverecs.bigcartel.com

No, it doesn NOT sound like *that* record. Besthöven's drunken one man dis-army Fofão Discrust team up with Jo from Germ Attak and delivers a raw 4-track 7" oozing of early Discharge.

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We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore, etc.—no major labels or labels distributed by major-affiliated distros. Please include postpaid price and contact information. Let us know where your band is from! *No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork.*

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(KS) Ken Sanderson
(FS) Fred Schrunk
(KR) Kat Smith
(MS) Martin Sorrondeguy
(AU) Andrew Underwood

ABSURDO – "Tots Sants" EP

Hot. Damn. This is some goooooood shit. Super fucking fast hardcore, a touch of thrash with a piccolo snare, relentless, hook-laden crunchy guitar, simple yet driving bass and vocals that slay me. This band reminds me of SIN ORDEN and, frankly, bands that I grew up with in Chicago. The lyrics are in Spanish and political yet personal, and image inducing reflections on bigger issues. The vocals are fucking incredible—high-pitched throat scratching, frantic madness that remain within a small range, but are so effective in delivery with unhinged energy causing pops, cracks and spine chilling, face punching attention. There is some definite classic hardcore riffage here, but just when you think there might be a break down, nope… it just keeps going—fast as fuck. Curiously, there is a lot of melodic stuff going on here and while the trajectory of the record never slows, there are definite moments of reflection here—all the tracks are fast, but not so careless in their speedy delivery that you lose the impact of each song. The packaging is beautiful and obviously very deliberate in concept, with a commentary on the back cover about complacency and absurdity of modern life and the thin veil of postmodern thought to justify apathy (maybe that's just me…). I cannot wait to see what happens with this band and I hope I can see them live. Get this. (MB)
(Discos Absurds)

ACTS OF SEDITION / RAW NERVES – split EP

Last I'd heard the Bay Area's own ACTS OF SEDITION was on their split LP with BAFABEGIYA, some seven years ago. This year-old recording (done at Earhammer—yes, it sounds awesome) is an improvement for sure. Bellowing vocals, tight and thick raging hardcore, vicious delivery—I am stoked. Also strong is Portland, Oregon's RAW NERVES. These tracks are two years old. They're dark, heavy and fast, with rough shouting vocals. The bassist and drummer do good work. This EP is a worthy investment. (JM)
(Man in Decline)

ALTERED BOYS – "The Nudge" EP

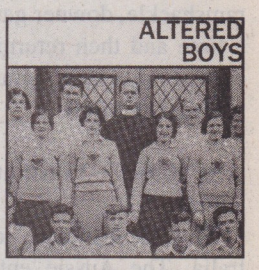
For fans of URBAN BLIGHT, CREEM, BRAIN SLUG and other contemporary bands doing a similar thing—and just as good. ALTERED BOYS play quality tough and livid hardcore with a somewhat blown-out grate; it's often moshy, but always stomping and catchy. The intro is excellent. I was iffy at first listen, but I get into it more and more with each spin. Adding this band to the list of reasons I want to make it out to New York's Alright fest in April. (DG)
(Katorga Works)

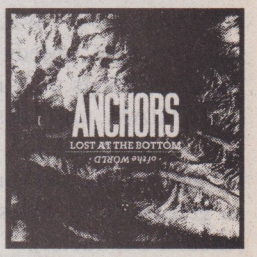
AMBULARS – "Dreams Asleep at the Wheel" LP

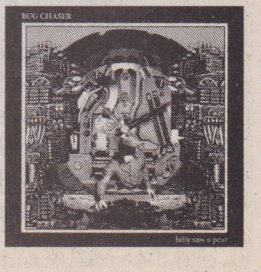
For those heavy-hearted indie pop punks, we have an LP that will stir your inner passions. But before we get any deeper into this review, ask yourself "Do I like NEUTRAL MILK HOTEL more than I like BLACK FLAG?" If the answer is "yes" I can wholeheartedly recommend checking out this record. And although my personal preference falls on the BLACK FLAG side, I can still recognize this as a rock-solid pop album. In fact, if you are an unapologetic indie rock fan who finds themselves reading *MRR* on a regular basis, you should absolutely make sure to give this LP a spin. The closest comparison I can dream up is the B-side to the CARRIE NATIONS LP or if SOUL ASYLUM was trying to do a cover set of MEASURE [SA] songs. Don't take my word for it, but Marco from Salinas Records called it RAMONES worship. Personally, I feel he's been smoking to many Chinese Rocks if he's making that comparison, but I'll let it slide, 'cause he put out an awesome record with this one. (FS)
(Salinas)

AMERICAN SNAKESKIN – "Turquoise for Hello" LP

Florida darkness. Late-night driving music for fans of early ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN, JOHN LURIE and ROYAL TRUX. Atmospheric, doomed Americana filtered through JOHN CALE records and







early 1980s Manchester; repetitive drug music for savaged blown-out minds. It's desolate and stark and you can picture the Tampa landscape, doomed industrial corridors, the empty condos and burned out lives. (LG)
(Janitor's Closet)

AMERICAN SNAKESKIN – "Turquoise for Hello" LP

Despite being composed of members of DIET COKEHEADS, ST. DAD, NEON BLUD and other reputable bands hailing from the curiously shaped state of Florida, the sole release from this power-trio went relatively unnoticed. AMERICAN SNAKESKIN doesn't fit neatly into a genre, nor do they necessarily depart from a trending style with particular flare, which could explain their lack of reception. Instead, AMERICAN SNAKESKIN hijacks the brittle exoskeleton of country and blues, imbues the bones with a distinctly Southern mysticism and shatters them with modern neuroses. The music is turgid and sick, qualifying as ramshackle, downer garage for segments at a time and then returning to pick at scabs between plucking guitar strings. (SL)
(Janitor's Closet)

ANCHORS – "Lost at the Bottom of the World" CD

Melodic hardcore/pop punk from Australia. The Aussie entry in the STRIKE ANYWHERE/A WILHELM SCREAM world of tight, speedy stuff, with double-guitar doodlings. Mix in the vocal stylings of SAMIAM, too. These guys do this stuff well as their melodic tempo changes and breakdowns are dead on. Fans of this popular genre will like this solid release. (RL)
(Creator Destructor)

APPALACHIAN TERROR UNIT – "It's Far from Fucking Over" CD

So I don't really like this band. I haven't liked them for years and I've said some mean things about them in the past, but the first couple songs on this disc sounded way better than their stuff I was forced to listen to, while being water-boarded in an Asheville basement for not having long enough dreads. Then I realized that this record is Episode 1 in a multi-CD discography project and the songs I was hearing were some of their earliest material, which as any jaded old music reviewer will tell you, is a band's best shit. Any FBI agent who wasn't able to get their hands on these classic modern American protest crust jams before they sold out on vinyl, can now round out their personal library of incriminating documents to provide to grand juries. (BL)
(Profane Existence)

ASILE – "Kichesippi Toxique" LP

Heavily DOOM- and AVSKUM-influenced and thankfully not another raw punk band. ASILE is from French Canada and sings in French, which sounds amazing. The CIMEX-style guitar carries this release and the Swedish influence is strong. Solid drumming and an interesting take on the DISCHARGE beat combined with the epic metallic guitar breathes fresh air into a well explored genre of punk. This record is very well packaged and definitely worth picking up. (AE)
(Rust and Machine)

ASTRAL TRAVEL – "Body Melt/Povos"

Amazing post-punk girl sound created by an Australian band that crafts powerful, eerie minor-key melodies that are evocative and otherworldly. Truly ominous, atmospheric, driving music that should elicit comparisons to the NEO BOYS and SIOUXIE by a band I can't wait to hear more from. I feel like most groups that I have heard recently mining this territory have been boring Xerox copycats or bands that wanna make it and thus make their sound way too cheesy. This is urgent, cool and enticing. I want more. (LG)
(Vertex)

BARB WIRE DOLLS – "Slit" CD

Perhaps this might be a little too slick for the ears of most *MRR* readers, but this Greek trio pound out seriously powerful guitar rock reminiscent of a time 20 years ago when the lines between rock/grunge/punk/alternative were blurry at best. HOLE definitely comes to mind, but the guitars are more discordant and the vocals are almost on a level with the BELLRAYS. The crossover sounds of the '90s are certainly en vogue these days, and BARB WIRE DOLLS manage to pull off what so many of those bands were *trying* to do back then—kick ass rock'n'roll music with the energy of early punk. Success. (WN)
(Darla)

BEST PRACTICES – "The EP LP" 12"

The band fit nine short, aggressive but catchy punk/pop songs on to one side of a 12" at 45 RPM, so there's a good start. Right of the bat it is reminiscent of the INSURGENT, which has a lot to do with the vocals (gruff and kind of screamy, like you can tell the guy was in emo/hardcore bands from the late '90s) but for the most part the music is more straightforward punk, with enough little guitar hooks to be interesting. On the whole, it sounds just like what it is: someone that comes from a hardcore background trying to write pop/punk songs. Yet there're just some things from the past that you can't escape, which makes it way more interesting and fun to listen to than pop punk. (PA)
(Tiny Engines)

THE BLACK COFFINS – "Dead Sky Sepulchre" CD

Starting off with Tibetan throat singing and the sound of flies buzzing, this has old-school Swedish death metal convolution, in the vein of ENTOMBED, WOLFBRIGADE or AUTOPSY, but still packs a groovy hardcore punch. The delivery is firm (no surprise there), the vocals often a duality, with screams alongside growls. Apparently GADGET's William Blackmon was behind the mixing and mastering, which is more crisp than gruff, and a number of other European hardcore figures make appearances, without however reinventing or reinterpreting the wheel. There are solos, blastbeats and double-peddling that might sound too clean and metallic for the punks, but a Sweden/metal-lovin' gal like myself doesn't find this too boring just yet. (LA)
(Black Hole Productions)

BLASTED – "Time to Die/Exposed"

Fast-as-fuck rock'n'roll guitar solos accompanying harsh hardcore riffs and, at times, D-beat drums. If anyone is wondering if there are killer current hardcore bands out of the UK—there fucking are, and BLASTED is one of the bands keeping it harsh. (KR)
(Dry Heave)

BLOODY HAMMER – 12"

I love Oi! (when done properly), and in my tenure at this magazine I've received many modern Oi! records for review. Unfortunately, most of them are downright awful. So, I am very fucking pleased to say that this record, which is undoubtedly Oi! (with some street punk tinges), fucking

rules. These Australians nailed it. Admittedly, their sound isn't exactly akin to traditional Oi!, it's more in the vein of CRIMINAL DAMAGE, musically speaking. The songs are dumb, energetic numbers featuring cool leads that will make you want to sing along and spill beer all over your best friends. The respective tracks that close out each side of this LP are two of the best Oi! songs I've heard in years. "Underdog" and "Fire in My Eyes" have the gruff catchiness that fans of the genre will remember from the best British bands of yesteryear. Thank you BLOODY HAMMER—the Ben Sherman sweater I'm currently wearing and I appreciate that someone can still pull off this style of punk. (KM)
(Hardcore Victim)

THE BORING – "Craving for Change" LP

This French five-piece plays a driving, heartfelt hardcore style. The recording features a full sound, though the drums could be sharper. Overall, there's a mix of basic fast stuff, some wild and passionate raging (à la yesteryear's ANOMIE or ANANDA), big shout-along choruses, and melodic guitar leads with, like, counterpoint and shit. The lyrics are in English and address personal and political topics. For my tastes, there's well-executed material here, but some of the guitar work is too accessible/poppy. (JM)
(Back to Reality / Blood and Doner / Chanmax / Crapoulet / Dingleberry / Dream Comes True / Famed / Farse Attack / Fouic Fouic Crew / Histrion / Kanal Hysterik / Monkey Cookie / No Routine / Oni Red Chords / Orchid Scent / Saddest Song / Stupid Kids)

BUCK GOOTER – "Witch Molecules" LP

Weirdo synth jams—this is the thing you put on when you are ready for everyone to clear out of the house when you want the party to be over. Dark, self-indulgent dirges that fall in line with BIG BLACK (on a really bad batch of mescaline), a bizarre distorted electronic incarnation of late-'80s Dischord...the only thing I can guarantee is that you haven't heard this before...I don't know if I like it but I keep listening. (WN)
(Beau Travail, X-Mist)

BUG CHASER – "Billy Saw a Pear/She's Ninety"

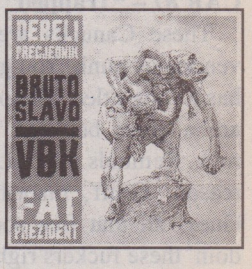
What can one expect from a band called BUG CHASER? I do not understand these people. It is pretty insane. There is a fat guy in overalls and a bunch of white guys who look related in a Southern way. It's all in the eyes. This is kind of like alternative rock meets punk, but not in the bad way that you would think. It is like a dumb funny punk band that somehow channels weirdo '90s alternative sounds, but in a strangely futuristic way. I would recommend giving it a listen at least once, although I am not sure it will get repeat spins. (GB)
(Mounds Music)

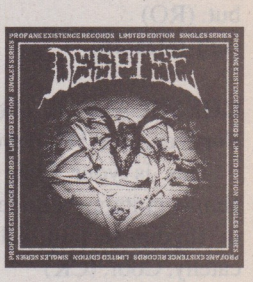
BUKKAKE BOYS – LP

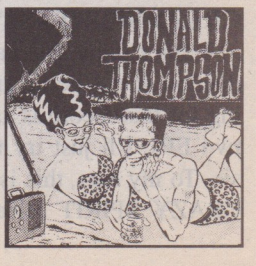
After an OK first 7" and a great split with AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER, BUKKAKE BOYS unleash this absolutely pummeling LP, which I believe came out in April or May of last year. These songs just hit you over the head with their power and pointed rage, and have some of the best, angriest and most unique riffs I've heard in years, which combined with the band's penchant for unusual but interesting song structures makes for an unpredictability that leaves you on the edge of your seat. The songs aren't necessarily distinguished from each other for the most part, except for one or two excellent mid-paced stompers that break things up, but when they're this fucking good and you've never heard most of these riffs before, you don't care. It's rare that a US hardcore band writes songs that deliver on the weight of their riffs and power alone—this is done best by the FRAMTIDs and TOTALITÄRs of the world—but BUKKAKE BOYS succeed with flying colors in this department. (The first DOUBLE NEGATIVE LP is similar example of what I'm talking about, though I'd say BUKKAKE BOYS are a little more "meat and potatoes.") I did just hear that they're done, which is a bummer because I would've liked to catch a set of theirs. (DG)
(Sorry State)

BULLETRIDDEN / HELLKRUSHER – split EP

I believe this is the first release of all-new material from this reliably excellent reissue label and I'm curious to hear the kind of stuff that made the cut. Obviously new material from the recently reactivated HELLKRUSHER is notable in its own right, but BULLLETRIDDEN are new to me. The BULLETRIDDEN side is comprised of three thick slabs of stench-y crust, with notes of early DEVIATED INSTINCT and STORMCROW, never moving faster than a quick lope and frequently slowing down for heavy riff breaks. These tracks are complimented by a recording that sounds classically muddy without sacrificing any power. This isn't the best stuff I've heard in the style, but it's a promising first taste and I'd definitely be curious to hear more. It seemed to me, way back when, that HELLKRUSHER never got the respect they deserved, despite having several well-distributed records under their belts including the majestic *Dying for Who?* EP and one of the best DISCLOSE splits. Fortunately the band doesn't seem to have lost a step, as opening track "Air Attack" showcases them in all of their DISCHARGE-reviving glory. The crisp recording highlights the raw-throated vocals, aggressive D-beats and sharp riffing to full advantage. This is an excellent return to form and a record well worth your crusty (possibly spanged) dollar. (AU)
(Antisociety)







LOS CAIDOS – LP

'80s-style skate punk from Argentina. You know—flipped up baseball hats and the works. Think old Venice, CA, and HERESY and you get the idea. I'm really into the heavier songs. A couple are too clean but side B *really* gets kickin' with some shit that'll get you tearing up mom's house and robbing the local liquor store if you're smart. (RO)
(Crapoulet)

LOS CAIDOS – "La Traición de la Serpiente" EP

This EP has been out for eight months now and I'm pretty glad it came in. These five Argentines play fast, angry, thrashy punk and also hella fast punk thrash. It sounds like these songs came from two different recording sessions, as some of the tracks do have a thinner sound, but both represent their music well. The lyrics are in Spanish, and the bit of writing inside the jacket shows the band motivated to have better lives than society would allow for. I am digging this. (JM)
(Crapoulet / En Los Nervios / Idea Venenosas / Kalaka / Kabuki / Punch Drunk / Punk Deluxe / Quien Calla Otorga)

CAR 87 – "Trapped" EP

These Canucks are spitting out some venomous punk. You gotta love a band that has a song titled "Shoot Up and Die." They are a cross between hardcore and street rock. Reminds me of LIMECELL for some reason. Gruff, razor-blade-ridden vocals. Guess all that free socialized medicine is doin' these fuckers right. I wish they would pick it up a notch at times but not a bad debut. (RO)
(self-released)

CHEMICALS – "For Real, For Life, Forever...Or Whatever" LP

This is your basic garage punk. Fast, simple guitars. Attitude-filled vocals. Rockin' rhythm section. All songs are short and catchy. Cool. (CK)
(Jonny Cat)

CRAZY SPIRIT – 12"

I don't think this band needs any introduction at this point, and since the packaging for this record is as stellar as their first two EPs, I'll just try to focus on the music. To my ears, this is the least interesting CRAZY SPIRIT release to date. I don't mean to imply that this is a bad record, because it's not—it's a fairly good record. However, after hearing the scummy, raw and urgent songs that comprised their demo and first two Toxic State EPs, the tracks on here almost seem like a step back. First off, everything sounds cleaner and more polished. It's like one of the layers of filth has been washed off. The mystery has sort of vanished and listening to this record, I can't help but feel that I know exactly what heights this band is capable of reaching, sonically speaking, and it seems like they're already treading water. The galloping cowboy beat is still omnipresent, and some of the riffs do bounce and strut with the moronic appeal these guys are known for, but there are only a few tracks on here that I frequently revisit. "Bricks," "Train" and "Baseball Bat" are really good songs, but they still don't hit me as hard as "I'm Dead," "Black Shadow" or "This World Is Not My Home." In the end, this is more of the same, which isn't necessarily a bad thing, I was just hoping for something even better than their early material. (KM)
(Toxic State)

CRITICAL CONVICTIONS – "Divisions" LP

This is really good. If you like NO STATIK, you will like this band. The songs move quickly, with a few mid-tempo parts and Maxx's vocals just dominate—in a good way. She sounds so fucking tough and awesome, with great, well-thought-out lyrics. This band is sick, come out west soon please! (KR)
(self-released)

CSMD – "Cosmic Noise Adventure" EP

Cosmic, indeed. Massive walls of atmosphere swirl through this recording, very little of which is chaotic bass/drum grindcore. The remainder is just a pummeling aural excursion through weird psychedelic insanity masked as music. Obviously I love it. (WN)
(No Fucking Labels)

CSMD / NEKROMANTIKER – split EP

Ah, the hot noisecore mess that is CSMD. If you haven't heard them already, it's probably because you'd fucking hate it. Indeed, it's a rare few who can withstand this kind of aggressively weird Theremin-assisted slop of classic film themes and sludgy feedback-infested noize, all presented in a faux live setting for your listening "pleasure." If you do happen to be one of the few, consider this yet another in a long string of hits, augmented by about one-eighth of a CONFUSE cover (I think). On the flip, NEKROMANTIKER deliver their now-patented brand of old weird Euro noize, heavy on the cracker-box drums, classic Kyushu melodic bass and completely fuzzed-out guitar. These tracks seem to be more frenetic than the those on the CHAOS DESTROY split, and I think they work better at this pace, perpetually teetering just on the edge of complete sonic collapse until the refreshing (but still noisy) mid-paced instrumental that ends the side. A perfect pairing for all the noize freaks out there and probably also for that one guy who lives down the block that you never see but all his windows are covered in tinfoil. (AU)
(No Fucking Labels)

THE DAGGER EYES – 12"

Whenever Hozac bands start doing Saturday morning superhero cartoon theme songs, this is what it might sound like. At the base of the sound is steady, subdued post-punk maybe akin to WIRE that trades off with more amped-up hardcore energy using a variety of synth and laser sounds effectively as instruments. The lyrics are almost spoken and often elongated, but definitely have a dramatic element. From what I can hear of the lyrics, my earlier Saturday morning cartoons remark isn't too far off the mark. Nice, punchy drums, a prominent bass tone that provides more than its share of this record's hooks and an entire LP's worth of decent songs. (DG)
(P. Trash)

DAIKON – "Complaining Songs" 12"

When I saw the (really nicely done) cover of this album it certainly had me thinking "'90s" and "emotive." I halfway expected to hear some JAWBREAKER influence; I also halfway expected to see the cover in an ad from an old issue of *HeartattaCk*. What I got was something that would likely appeal to fans of '90s pop. It reminds me of more jangly, upbeat versions of the WEAKERTHANS' earlier songs. At times the WEAKERTHANS reference is evoked by the vocal delivery even more than it is by the music. There's occasionally some cello on it and some male and female vocal harmonies. This record has a niche that it seems to fall into and celebrate, and if

you're happy to fall into that niche as well, then this is one you may want to seek out. (P$)
(Fullyintercoastal)

DAWN OF HUMANS – "Blurst of the Birdfish" EP

Coming out of the same NYC scene that spawned PERDITION, CRAZY SPIRIT, HANK WOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS et al., DAWN OF HUMANS are on a whole other tip, delving into the same nightmarish terrain as early THROBBING GRISTLE and bad-trippers FIFTY FOOT HOSE before them. Sonically speaking, the focus is on fuzzy, weirdo punk dirges, taking up the framework of hardcore one minute only to ditch it the next, or, as is more often the case, dissolving it into an ominous, apocalyptic meltdown. The bizarre, psychedelic shit cartoon art (and I mean that in the best way possible) only adds to the sense of impending headfuckery, to say nothing of the vocals, which alternate between, shall we say, "traditional" HC screams and something vaguely resembling the spawn of a gremlin and DEVO's terrifyingly sexless Booji Boy. Maddening and supremely satisfying, this is music by freaks, for freaks, with no room for squares or the weakly stomached. Can't recommend this highly enough. (WB)
(Toxic State)

DEATHRAID / DESPERAT – split 12"

I started with the DESPERAT side, because I somehow only recently discovered them, and shit, I've been missing out. On this split, DESPERAT keeps the tradition of Swedish D-beat hardcore alive and kicking with their steady drumming, upward moving riffs and strained hollering. Seattle's DEATHRAID compliment them well here. More comparable to early-'90s TOTALITÄR in guitar tone and vocal quality/phrasing, DEATHRAID has me wanting to go back and check out their previous records that I've overlooked! The snarl on those vocals, man…this is a crushing split, aside from the metal-looking art and layout. Ya gotta get this one! (MA)
(World Funeral)

DEBELI PRECJEDNIK / FAT PREZIDENT – "Bruto Slavo/VBK" CD

Confusing, I know. Certainly I was confused. It's one band, with one LP and one EP on one disc. You wouldn't know from the album that FAT PREZIDENT (which seems to be the acceptable abbreviation for the group) is from Croatia. Indeed, they've captured that melodic Southern California hardcore sound down to the correctly accented English. Hence, fans of LAGWAGON, RISE AGAINST et al. will not be disappointed (though the detractors of US hardcore cultural imperialism will probably be a little discontented). They do it really well. Me, while a sucker for that sound, I also like a little international diversity. And was thus mightily pleased, not to say thoroughly engaged, with the *VBK* EP appended at the end, which is three glorious tracks of melodic hardcore sung in Serbo-Croat. Now that's more like it! (RK)
(Moonlee)

DEBORAH KANT – "Terminal Rail/Route" LP

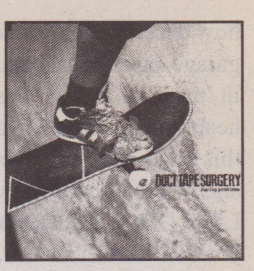
I have no previous knowledge of this French band, but this appears to be their fourth release. Sounded pretty deranged and spooky until I realized that it was meant to be played at 33 RPM. Long, lo-fi, jammy, reverb-y compositions with enough indie and psych parts to lose my attention. Yeah, I'm not the best judge of this kind of sound, but the more straightahead parts sound good to me. This band is great and there's a lot of interesting stuff here. It's just not my thang. (MA)
(Boom Boom Rikordz)

DESPISE – "Desolate/Inebriated"

This is the second of a Limited Edition Singles Series by Profane Existence, so if this is your thing, you probably already know about it. Depressed, desolate and inebriated (like the track titles suggest), DESPISE play aggravated, blackened crust, with a nice, thick dissonance on guitars, drums that sound like they're coming from a nightmarish basement and desperate, growling female vocals. Psychosocial anguish and imminent doom aside, this is evidently for the tormented, self-destructive recluse. My shit exactly! This actually reminds me of pizza crusts: you love 'em or leave 'em. I like pizza crusts; and I like crust music—in fact I felt enlightened the first time I encountered it and kicked myself for not discovering it earlier—so, I'm more than happy to have your unwanted share. One man's crust is another man's treasure. (LA)
(Profane Existence)

THE DESTRUCTORS – "Ragnarok ~ 12.12.12" CD

I have immense respect for this band and the scene from which they came. After their 1984 hiatus, I have not paid them much mind, but apparently they are still kicking around England and making CDs at least yearly since 2007. The vocals are still Allen Adams as it was in the beginning. If you don't know who Allen Adams is, he is the genius behind the lyrics to "Northern Ripper" which we've all heard whether performed by the DESTRUCTORS or the BLANKS. Steve Rolls and Dave Colton are still involved, just not on drums. When I heard the first riffs pour out of the CD player, they made me take notice. These guys still have it in them and know their punk history (possibly because they're a part of it) and additionally have impeccable taste. They cover the EXPLOITED, DISCHARGE and WARSAW. The DESTRUCTORS



now describe themselves as a "scuzz grunge garage punk rock band from Peterborough in the UK." This description makes my heart hurt a little bit as early members of this band were involved with the SYSTEM and one member even went on to join ENGLISH DOGS (although whether in the good years, I have no idea). Old bands like this that are active today are why I don't go to reunion shows. It's too sad to watch a band grow up and lose the fire they had in the late '70s or early '80s. They think they still get it, but they don't. I can't give this a good review, but it's not bad, either—it's just not the DESTRUCTORS. (AE)
(self-released)

DIFERENT! – "End of the Wave Discography Collection" LP

It's always interesting to listen to a collection from a band you have never heard before. DIFERENT! is a skate punk band from Argentina that reminds me a lot of Orlando's now-defunct NEW MEXICAN DISASTER SQUAD. You know, hardcore with a lil' bit more melody and a touch of modern influence so they aren't sounding exactly like an early Thrasher comp band. While this band is good in doses, a whole 20-song LP is a little hard to take. (JF)
(Crapoulet / Blood and Doner / No Glory)

DISTRESS / FATUM – split EP

Shit, when I put on the FATUM side I thought I had left the turntable on 33, but no, these fuckers are that heavy. Chuggy, death-metal-influenced crust with raw and blown-out production. The bass tone is kicking my dick in and the riffs are relentless and brutal. Like ACEPHALIX, but in Russian—Moscow, to be more precise. DISTRESS is from St. Petersburg and is likewise out to crush shit. They are playing faster and more in a Scandi-crust vein with less overt metal influence. They have a similar sound to WARCOLLAPSE and actually do one of their songs on this disc. This split is for sure worth checking out. (BL)
(Gasmask / Head Noise / Miruus Levyt / Punk With Power / Total Punk)

DONALD THOMPSON – "II" EP

Four songs of straight-up punk à la Wimpy-era QUEERS with maybe a lil' bit of early TURBONEGRO styling thrown in for good measure. There is nothing really special about this Italian band, but they aren't bad either. If you like early QUEERS, then this might be something you would dig. (JF)
(Collettivo la Defense / Kornalcielo / Lapaguis, no info / Mescaleros Crew / Sonatine Produzioni / Surfin' Ki)

DUCT TAPE SURGERY – "Facing Problems" CD

The cover photo reflects the band's name, with some skater's shoe reconstructed with duct tape. It sounds like skate rock to me, too—lighter guitar and short, plain songs. The lyrics largely discuss societal pressures. This sounds like a fun time for them and their friends, but it's not something one would send away for. (JM)
(Stop 'n' Go / Time)

ERASE NEGATE DELETE – "Of Rust and Rotten Things" LP

Space-age cyber-punk in your face. The majority is straight out of late-1980s dark industrial dance (SKINNY PUPPY, MINISTRY), but this is clearly a modern record (excessive autotune vocals are ever-present, if you have any doubt). Hateful and hurtful, desperate sounds from one confused (but determined) dude in Southern California. For a punk reference, think INTRO5PECT, but this thing is so far removed from 90% of the material in the magazine that I don't even know what to call it. That said, it brings out a fifteen-year-old inside me in a really awesome way. (WN)
(self-released)

EVERYONE ASKED ABOUT YOU – "Let's Be Enemies" LP

What a strange surprise. How could there possibly be a new band with this same name? That was solved with a quick read of a note, and no—this is the same Arkansas band that I played a show with in Little Rock in 1998. This is the unreleased LP that apparently was recorded shortly before the band broke up in 1999. While similar to their material that was released when they were together, the LP sounds more mature and put together like they really found what they wanted to do. That's not to say that the RAINER MARIA reference is not still totally applicable, especially in the vocals—not that their voices necessarily sound the same but that the female/male vocal interplay is done in a similar way. You can also apply the "sappy emo" tag to most of the record, but if you were to take the first song, for example, there is some added spacey synth sounds and some noodley guitar stuff that is reminiscent of the poppier, early JOAN OF ARC songs. They also manage to break up the record a bit with some weirder quiet songs that work out pretty well. It comes in a hand-screened, sparkly sleeve but unfortunately there are no lyrics and little info about the record at all. Maybe it's nostalgia talking, but this strange surprise is a good one. (PA)
(25 Diamonds)

EX-CULT – LP

I lodged some criticisms of the single that preceded this LP two issue ago, and my accusation that this Memphis group is generally unconvincing continues to gnaw at me on their full-length (admittedly, it has something to do with the TY SEGALL production credit). But the album is a massive improvement, and with more wax to stretch out, the group musters some memorable tracks. The B-side in particular finds the guitarist much more versatile, employing bends and six-string punk throttling that effectively propels the tracks. The B-side's general superiority makes it seem as if the track sequencing mimics the order in which the songs were written, as if they grew more ambitious the more they wrote. The vocals stretch out, conjuring defeated melodies at certain times, and an affected sneer at others. The occasional female back-ups should be made a frequent appearance, as they have an odd chemistry together. A TY SEGALL production credit might work wonders as the album's one-sheet gets tossed across the digital desk of indie rock journalists, but it inspires skepticism here. Luckily, EX-CULT overcomes whatever SEGALL's influence was! (SL)
(Goner)

FATHERS DAY – "I'll Tell You When you've Had Enough" CD

Wow, haha, what a turd. This band sound like PITBOSS 2000, but they can't play their instruments. The songs are so fucking bad. The guitar tone is grating and the drumming…is that drumming? I guess this is supposed to be shocking in lyrical content, glorifying rape, child molestation and shit like that. There was only one GG guys and he is thankfully dead. The liner notes have a bunch of old school porn, some of which is pretty awesome, but the overall package is lame. I didn't realize that this kind of stuff was relevant, but hey, if you can't get laid,

are preoccupied with your dick size and are bummed about having to jerk off in the bathroom 'casue you live with your mom, I guess this is an apt soundtrack. The song "You're not Gay," is red flag. It seems like all of this effort is trying to hide something. Maybe you are gay? What's so scary about that, dude? I can't help but feel sorry for you. (MB)
(self-released)

THE FITT – "The Fitt is Dead" 12"

Well here's something different. The mutant crossbreed between punk, metal, sludge, hardcore, grunge, and even industrial, during late '80s/early- and mid-'90s is one I find intriguing. This slightly disturbed frogspawn contained the better elements of this potent mix—concrete song writing, demented tunes, aggro delivery, heavy hard-hitting sound and tight musicianship (before the word 'tight' was thrown around to mean "cool"). The FITT, hailing from Apollo, Pennsylvania, conjure sonic memories imprinted on me by bands of said mutant crossbreed. Band I loved in my late teens and for which I still have a soft spot today: the MELVINS, UNSANE, HELMET, GODFLESH. This here 12" is apparently the final installment in the band's discography, as *The Fitt is Dead*. A couple songs have a rockier, indeed grungier feel to the guitars and vocals (yet are still engaging on a composition level) but others, like "Wipe Down" and "Before your Knock," manage to hit you like a ton of bricks—mission accomplished. Tidbit: The final track is a twisted retake on NEIL YOUNG's "Helpless". Now excuse me, I'm going to seek out their others records. (LA)
(Deadfinger Music, no info)

FOIERNACHT – "Zeit Bleib Stehn..." CD

I had to stop looking at the cheesy photos of these guys posing in the booklet, 'cause it brings out the most negatively judgmental part of me. But after listening to the CD, my conclusion remains about the same: if you like the heavily produced shit on Fat Wreck Chords or LARS FREDERIKSEN AND THE BASTARDS, wanky solos and predictable melodies and gang vocals, check this out. I don't. (MA)
(Spirit of the Streets)

FRET RATTLES – "The First One" LP

These guys wanna be the DEVIL DOGS real bad but it doesn't quite have enough 'tude. "Medicine Head" is my favorite. There's some boring blues-rock bullshit but for the most part it's good dope. I think these fuckers would tear it up live. (RO)
(self-released)

FRIZZ / TRUE MUTANTS – split EP

FRIZZ starts out with a shambolic post-TY SEGALL indie-rock-edged garage type of thing, then end their side with a more frantic, blown-out song "Undercover Cop" that reminded me of when SONIC YOUTH covered CRIME. TRUE MUTANTS features desperate girl vocals, and are a much more compelling listen. Made me think of listening to GORILLA ANGREB and the OBSERVERS, basement shows, frantic dancing. Definitely the stronger side... (LG)
(Negative Party)

GERMAN SHEPHERDS – "Music for Sick Queers" LP+EP

Fuckin' sick. This kinda bums me out, because I still don't have either *original* GERMAN SHEPHERDS records, both lovingly reissued here for the first time. Kinda crazy—they packaged the LP with the 7" EP, but made the EP sleeve into a huge 12" sleeve with biography notes inside. I am down. Fuck, this is fucking rad minimal industrial shit, and I have only listened to the 7" so far. Not super abrasive, more bubbly and brooding, and brings to mind some of their more experimental Kraut NDW contemporaries with plenty of tape loops and minimal electronics. The LP gets more into weirdo loner outsider territory, bordering on annoying, but a few tracks I will definitely come back to. Glad to see someone put the effort into this, arguably nicer than trying to track down an original. (GB)
(Superior Viaduct)

GOLDEN TORSO – "Broken Extra Arms" EP

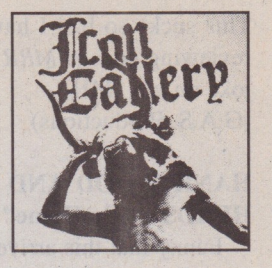
This is one of those records about which I have nothing bad to say and equally little good to offer. Yeah, it's well played, but it's also painfully generic pseudo-aggressive melodic punk. The best I can say is "eh." (JH)
(25 Diamonds)

GOOD THROB – "Feminazi" EP

Punk like as it's s'pposed'a be! GOOD THROB serves up sniggering and apoplectic feminist stream-of-consciousness jabs at posers, the patriarchy, customer service and other such drudgery that keeps us down. "You think you're punk/You think you're good/ But you're nothing more than a sleazy bastard..." Sloppy and teetering on inept genius, these punks sound like SCHUND crossed with the angry teenage brain of Jean Smith from MECCA NORMAL. (FF)
(Superfi)

GUILTY AS SIN – "Future History" CD

There is a sick feeling I get when a release gives credit, as if they were in the band, to the person who did tattoos, a person credited with "belly dancing" and someone responsible for "premium cigars." This is neither punk nor metal but some awful progressive hard rock. Imagine SEPULTURA's worst album done by a bunch of narcissistic hippies who decided to throw a bunch of keyboards, timbales and darbuka in the mix. Oh, let's not forget some guitar wanking.



This sucks so bad I have to wonder if the reviewing gods at *MRR* are trying to play a joke on me. (MH)
(G.A.S. Productions)

HANK WOOD AND THE HAMMERHEADS – "Go Home" 12"

Funny that this arrives at *MRR* HQ after just about everyone in the world made up their mind about it ages ago. It's definitely one of those love-it-or-hate-it deals: either you declared six months back that this was the greatest record of the year or you let the infamous chicken killing business make up your mind before you even gave it a shot. Me, I'm somewhat indifferent to the mixture of farfisa organ and surf guitar, but there's no doubting the idiot genius on full display (or the mental image it conjures of urban rodeo punks riding a mechanical bull). And damn if it doesn't *look* cool (really, the design—all the way from the front and back covers to the insert and fold-out poster—is impeccable). So there you have it, folks: love it or leave it; these guys don't give a shit either way. (JH)
(Toxic State)

HEAT DUST – 10"

Super fuzzed-out but catchy punk usually gets a DINOSAUR JR. reference, but times change and quite frankly the small amount of guitar shredding on this record makes it sound like they're not even trying to shred guitar at all in comparison. These five songs sound similar to MILK MUSIC in that heavily distorted, upbeat, indie/punk way, but the majority of it is a little poppier, with vocals that are more sung than screamed. The cooler stuff is slower, slightly droning with haunting vocals, such as the first half of the last song—it would be great as a song alone rather than breaking into the faster, heavier part that is characteristic of the rest of the record. (PA)
(Texas Is Funny)

ICON GALLERY – "Valiance/The Pact"

Since I have friends in Pennsylvania, I've been getting regular updates on this remarkable band, but I feel like they're a bit of an unknown commodity still (or a least I don't hear nearly enough about them). While the punk pedigrees of the individual members are impeccable, this is very much NWOBHM style in the best way possible. Capturing all the glorious epic qualities that genre can muster, and coupling it with a diehard DIY mentality, ICON GALLERY draws deep from the ANGEL WITCH/PRIEST/MAIDEN well with a hefty dose of GIRLSCHOOL on the side. Soaring vocals and harmonies are the order of the day, with busy and proficient riffing coupled with arena-ready solos to take it over the top. The only contemporary this band has is CHRISTIAN MISTRESS. Total kill. (AU)
(Solar Funeral)

IMPO AND THE TENTS – "Nothing to Say" EP

Hey, guess what a band with dick joke pun for a name will never do? Well, there are a few things: be interesting, be funny, get a good review from me…the list goes on. This is generic pop punk from Sweden with really sugary hooks and lots of "wah-oh" shit where they ran out of lyrics. Utterly forgettable, thankfully. (BL)
(Push My Buttons)

IN DEFENCE – "Into the Sewer" CD

This disc combines the above-named LP with the material from their split 7"s with MOTHERSPEED and PARTY BY THE SLICE, all of which were recorded in 2009. The band plays mostly fast, tough-guy hardcore with sometimes clever and funny political and scene-related lyrics. By the standards of the genre they are good songwriters and keep their shit pretty tight. For a band like this, I feel the lyrics are of particular import, so I was disappointed that the lyrics from the splits are not included. I've found this band to be good but not crucial, and I feel that way about this release. (JM)
(Profane Existence)

INSERVIBLES – "Una Vida de Tristeza" EP

After four EPs and one LP, INSERVIBLES have crafted another demented, dark hardcore assault. The overall sound is *very* akin to the second WRETCHED 12", but with rawer production and less departure from hardcore. This band surely stands out to me in the same way that the amazing FOGNA EP from a couple years back did (what the hell happened to that band?), but INSERVIBLES has that distinct, classic Mexican/South American hardcore in the mix. The vocals push the hi-fi through the roof a couple times, but that's what happens with home four-track recordings, which might I add is the punk way to do it. Thumbs up! (MA)
(La Vida Es Un Mus / Shogun / SPHC)

ISTERISMO – "Follia Verso l'Interno" 12"

Short answer: of course this is fucking great. You should buy it as soon as possible. Longer answer: Japan's premier (but not only, shockingly enough) Italian-speaking crasher crusties have finally dropped their first full-length, though full-length might be a misnomer since it seems like it's over in the blink of an eye. Save the introductory track, this is virtually all go, just pedal-to-the-metal blown-out aggression, spearheaded by articulate vocals and a bass sound that recalls nuclear testing as much as DECEIVING SOCIETY. Drum hits sound like rocks falling from a great height, guitar licks alternate between jet-engine roar and Scandi whine, and the whole thing comes together with a recording that (while maybe a tad treble-y) reinforces the desperate immediacy of ISTERISMO's attack. Although they might not be the sonic heirs of WRETCHED, they definitely share the same spittle-flecked sense of desperation, as if every word, every note might be their very last. Murderous stuff from what is indisputably one of the best bands in the world today. (AU)
(Crust War / La Vida Es Un Mus)

JUBILE – "Songs of the Cold North" LP

JUBILE is a self-described noise duo from France. I hate to nitpick (actually, I fucking love to nitpick), but there's nothing on *Songs of the Cold North* that I'd peg as noise. Perhaps noise in 2013 means sounding like a two-piece approximation of '90s post-hardcore beardo horseshit. If so, then I can let the noise tag slide. If not, then I want these people found, hog-tied and force-fed ANGELIC UPSTARTS singles until their turds turn razor sharp. Lettering on insert by Aaron Cometbus. (MC)
(Assos'y'Song / Boom Boom Rikordz / Et Mon Cul C'est Du Tofu? / Katatak / Rock'n'Roll Masturbation)

KRÜGER – "Ruku V Ruke S Pokrokom" EP

With a standard template, black-and-white CRASS-styled stenciled circle of the title (*Hand in Hand to Progress*) over photos of factories and wastelands and the umlauted band name overtop, this could go either way—but the needle drops to a surprisingly refreshing attack of completely rampaging D-beat hardcore. The six tracks by this Prague band provides enough raw-punk'd,

distorted crackle around the edges, but the really solid and thick overdrive is closer to the WOLFBRIGADE/DISFEAR school, with brutal growled and guttural vocal trade-offs in Czech. Propelled by solidly manic yet consistent drumming, the quick guitar bits that bubble up and squeal through the mayhem. When a style is done really well, it shakes off a lot of the fatigue brought on by legion of repetition and generic imitation, and this just begs to be cranked louder and louder to achieve that effect! Lyrics: Anti-war, pro-survival, anti-punk consumerism. Killer! (KS)
(Aback Distribuce / Anarchist Black Cross, no info / Cestou Na Hrbitov, no info / Good Night White Pride / GRF / Hluboka Orba / Nuclear Madness / Uchylny Kos, no info / Veva, no info / Wolfdrunk, no info)

LEECHES! – "Rott" EP

The cover of this EP leaves much to be desired, but the music is fucking killer. This three-piece is from Western Australia (Perth, to be exact). It's solid, powerful, mid-tempo hardcore. It's melodic in a SICK-OIDS way, with a good amount of rawness and ugliness. The last song gets pretty DICKS-y. Dig. Buy this! (KR)
(Bridge Sounds)

LOTUS FUCKER – "Forever My Fighting Spirit" 12"

I've been following LOTUS FUCKER ever since the demo came out, really since the KAMIKAZE NOISE days, and while the material has always been good-to-great (falling mostly on the great side), this LP is truly a step beyond. This recording is an amazingly cohesive amalgamation of influences ranging from Japanese hardcore to classic SoCal emo to noisecore to good old '80s USHC, drawn together in a seamless and (most importantly) original-sounding whole. There may be bands that sound like this or that bit of this LP, but there really isn't any band that sounds just like LOTUS FUCKER, and that's a rare quality these days, especially when coupled with this level of quality. By turns this is epically melodic, viciously abrasive and packed full of J-pop goodness. All of this applies without even mentioning the side-length closer "Inner Peace," the rare experiment that actually fucking works better in practice than it does in theory, a complete clinic in building tension without ever losing focus or drive. This is up there with PAINTBOX's *Trip, Trance & Travelling* in the pantheon of absolute classic hardcore albums of the new century. "I fucking fight…noise forever"…fuck yes. (AU)
(Katorga Works / RSR / SPHC)

LOWER – "Someone's Got It in for Me/But There Has to be More"

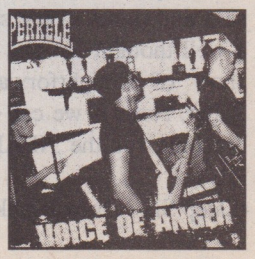
Meet my new favourite band everybody! Unlike their previous EP, *Walk on Heads*, which had a very earnest, raw, FUGAZI-esque post-hardcore urgency to it, this 45 by Denmark's LOWER, moves further into the darkness. Both of these songs are absolutely brilliant. While this does remind me of things (really good things, bands I really love) I will not make any comparisons, as I fear it would taint the magic. This is a self-contained tour de force, a spectacular oddity that traverses the darkest, most esoteric corners of the post-punk cosmos. The exasperated, lamenting vocals have a narcotic quality of the highest caliber. The guitars resonate a melancholic sentiment so palpable I can feel it gnawing at my heartstrings. The commanding drums on both sides set a black-and-white scene that enchants. The lyrics on "There Has to be More" are pure poetry. (Yes, there is such a thing as good poetry, didn't you know.) I cannot recommend this enough! (LA)
(540)

ANA LUCIA – LP

A solo record from ANA formerly of Chicago's much-loved BUSY SIGNALS that sorta reminds me of Kathy Valentine's pre-GO-GO'S band, the TEXTONES. Power pop rock with strong female vocals; certain songs sound like something from the *Valley Girl* sound track, super well produced and just so exactly like early-'80s pop-rock skinny-tie sound it's uncanny. The record was produced by Paul Roessler of 45 GRAVE/SCREAMERS/etc. if you care about such details… I wish it was a little more raw, but if you were a fan of the BUSY SIGNALS and wanna listen to something that evokes SHIVVERS mixed with BLONDIE then you will not go wrong by grabbing this! (LG)
(Ramo / Base)

MAGIC TRASH – "The Way I'm Living" EP

An offering of what we will now call "unsavory lifestyle rock." It's easy to imagine the two core members of MAGIC TRASH indulging in the activities described in their songs—it explains why they haven't taken much time to develop their songs. They're spending time butting heads with girlfriends opposed to their drug intake, finding their "baby," "daddy" and "brotha" in jail, and getting "loaded," all according to the A-side, song by song, respectively and in that order. In between, they apparently found time to track some rudimentary garage and yowl about these everyday activities over several minute-and-a-half ditties. The willful simplicity just isn't substantiated by any other quality. It's not particularly fierce, it's certainly not clever and there isn't a trace of cheekiness or wit to qualify its redundant idiocy as punk. Unsavory lifestyle rockers, eat your heart out. (SL)
(Kool Ranch, no info)



MALDITO PAIS – 12"

Rollicking, melodic punk from Spain with members of TEMPESTA, DERROTA and DISPARO, this is apparently a vinyl repress of the MALDITO PAIS demo cassette. Could have fooled me! Really though, this sounds as good (actually, *way* better) than most bands' mature works, with a well-honed '80s punk sound and some truly inspired songwriting. There's a decided post-/anarcho-punk influence here, most notably on the production, and the thick echo on the vocals definitely takes this to the next level for me, but every member of this band nails it across the board. The 12" starts off on a fairly upbeat note and retains a fun, exuberant feel, but some more aggressive sections pop up from time to time and provide a nice counterpoint to the rest. The whole thing is endlessly catchy, like this-just-bore-holes-in-your-brain-and-laid-eggs catchy. If you dig bands like ESCROTO DE RATA this will be absolutely crucial, but either way it'd be a big mistake to miss out on this one. (WB)
(Pifia)

MANPIG – "The Grand Negative" 12"

As one of the most storied, anticipated, rumored and taunting "upcoming" releases of the last two decades, it seems a near miracle that I am holding the MANPIG LP in my hands. They were name-checked in "H.S.M.P." (look it up) and featured on flyers alongside CROSSED OUT, NO COMMENT, etc. during the early '90s heyday of powerviolence, but *most* of the world really only knew of MANPIG as the "new INFEST band." Unfortunately, the original tapes of these tunes from 1992 were lost so Domino and RD had to start all over, with the results of eight years of work culminating in this LP, *The Grand Negative*. The majority of this 17-track LP is straight-ahead, flesh-tearing, thrashing hardcore with a pretty *huge*, crisp sound, more often than not hovering around a mid-to-*fast*-paced tempo, with blasting parts sorted throughout. There is also plenty of experimentation happening and chances being taken with tastefully ambitious leads, and when all is said and done, every second of this LP is a well thought out and incredibly executed show of straightforward hardcore force. Killer. Now, if we can only have the same outcome for the NEANDERTHAL CD... (JU)
(Deep Six / Draw Blank, no info)

MERDA – "Indio Cocalero" LP

Whoa! MERDA, from Brazil, starts off this LP with some blazing, straight-ahead hardcore, but you realize quickly that there is something different about this band—especially when the pan flute comes in. After the smooth sax solo and the pleasant organ, you realize that this isn't your normal HC record. It sounds cheesy, but trust me, it's not. Well, not too much. For the most part, they play tuneful, fast hardcore and use all kinds of extra instruments to fill out their sound. Occasionally, they delve into samba beats and fuck around. I always hate it when people say that a record is "fun," but this *really is* a fun record. The closest comparison I can think of is the old Bay Area band, YOUR MOTHER. This is excellent. (GH)
(SPHC / Läjä / Give Praise)

MUJERES – "Soft Gems" LP

Hmmm. This one's very mysterious. The cover is white, with gold silkscreen. It seems it's limited to 100 copies. It's out on Sones Records, but the address is totally indistinguishable on the cover. A quick internet search gets me to a Spanish label in Barcelona. The first track is sort of prodding and mysterious. I don't know where this will go. I'm four songs in and I'm still not sure where it's going or what to expect. At times, it's fuzzed out and deliberate. Other times, it becomes twangy and folky. Overall, this is a rather soft, sometimes fuzzy, often folky release that takes you back to the '60s. If you put it alongside a SEX PISTOLS record, you probably wouldn't call it punk, but it's got an independence and attitude that makes it punk, if you ask me. Incidentally, I think I've figured out that the gold screen (and gold vinyl) edition is limited to 100 copies. I get the impression there is a "regular" edition. (KK)
(Sones)

NEEDLE AUTOMATIX – "Television Scream/I'm a Tumour for You"

If I didn't know any better I would think NEEDLE AUTOMATIX was from Japan. They are from Italy, but have a catchy, poppy '90s garage punk style that reminds me of the REGISTRATORS. The music is fast and frantic, but immaculately played. The singer has an attitude-filled drawl, but each word is sung perfectly. That all adds up to two fun punk songs. Plus, the choking at the end of "I'm a Tumour for You" is a nice touch. (CK)
(Tornado Ride)

NOISEAR – "Turbulent Resurgence" LP

BRUTAL TRUTH, WORMROT, LYCANTHROPY, PARLAMENTARISK SODOMI, PLUTOCRACY, PHOBIA, SAYYADINA, KILL THE CLIENT, AFGRUND, NASUM and MISERY INDEX all found their own place in modern grindcore history by releasing amazing albums that not only had wonderful songwriting, but set themselves apart by not being the next NAPALM DEATH knockoff. They did their own thing and didn't rehash the ideas of old. NOISEAR accomplished this back in 2008 with their second LP *Pyroclastic Annhiallation* but nobody seemed to notice. With *Turbulent Resurgence*, NOISEAR creates with ease, as if they are toying with us. Recorded in a day or two, these 23 songs in 18 minutes on a 45 RPM 12" will bludgeon and confuse. The music is ungodly complex, which might not be your cup o' grindcore, but they never lose sight of simply grinding. WINTERS IN OSAKA guests and creates a few noise intro/outros, but the core is drummer Bryan Fajardo and guitarist Dorian Rainwater writing amazing grindcore. If you like technical grind, listen to this. (MH)
(Deep Six)

NO MORE SAINTS – "Destroyers of Empathy" EP

Sufficiently ripping 7" of early-'90s-era POISON IDEA styles and some *Crossover*-era DRI thing going on with a noticeable California lean. There's some serious quality riffing here that obviously took some effort and skill to craft. I'm impressed. (JU)
(Seize Control / Soul Exchange)

NOT ON TOUR – "All This Time" 12"

The absolute first thing that one notices about the music is that the kick drum is by far the loudest thing in the mix. I feel like I'm being beaten over the head with it. NOT ON TOUR plays straightforward pop punk, stylistically sitting somewhere between RAG RAGE and CRACKBOX. In fact, the CRACKBOX reference is pretty good for understanding the metallic nature of this record, from its triggered-sounding drums to its metallic guitar riffs and leads. That, in addition to the way the singer intones (which is where I get RAG RAGE from), ends up giving this record sort of an Eastern European melodic hardcore/pop punk feel. (LP)
(Diner Junkie)

NUN – "Solvents/Cronenberg"

Yes! More intoxicating synth-drenched excellence! A vibrant 45 with two magnificently sinister tracks that have me instantly addicted. Hypnotic, glistening analog synths that are as ideal for relentless dancing ("Solvents") as they are for rocking back and fourth in solitude, stuck in a schizophrenic loop ("Cronenberg"); the throbbing basslines steadily creep and up down, while the drum machine beats and screeches likes it was under the commanding power of SUICIDE's Martin Rev. Outlandish like COIL, eerie like IRON CURTAIN and superbly manic in vocal delivery, this is just stunning—like when an image is distorted in a broken mirror, or light is split through a prism into its spectral colors. A record that captures you in its kaleidoscopic trap; a ghost that haunts. Give me more! (LA)
(Nihilistic Orbs)

OLDE YORK – "Shallow World" CD

New York Hardcore, meet Big Recording Budget. They'll probably be touring Europe with 25 TA LIFE or whoever in a year or so. I hope no one ends up wanting to kick my ass over this review. (DG)
(WTF)

OPPOSABLE THUMBS – CD

An interesting musical combination of post-punk, '90s alternative and modern garage. Whenever I write something like that, I chuckle because I always think, "Who in their right mind would want to listen to something like that?" Me, for one. I like a band that embraces disparate styles and attempts to combine them all together. A for effort. The singer has an odd voice. I like odd voices. They are more exciting than regular voices. There is some type of effect on it making it sound somewhat robotic, yet it reminds me of Perry Farrell's in the early years of JANE'S ADDICTION, though not as high and screechy. Overall, OPPOSABLE THUMBS aren't too bad. I'd listen to this again. (CK)
(Gubbey)

ORGANS – "We Come Out at Night" EP

Not a goddamn morsel of new ground is broken here, but at least there's some fucking oomph present. ORGANS offer up something akin to the MAKERS when they still had a pair, especially on "Mainline Woman," which is simply great, gutsy garage punk rock. It far outshines the two mid-tempo tunes also featured here, which is a bit of a bummer. (MC)
(Chickpea)

LAS OTRAS – "Las Otras" EP

Barcelona is killing it right now with a remarkable outpouring of new and incredible hardcore bands, and from this incubator of anarchy LAS OTRAS was born! Kinetic and charged feminist hardcore bubbling over with spastic ferocity and punch. When I first heard this record, I didn't realize that I was holding my breath the whole time, caught up in that feeling you get as you witness sincere bitterness and rage laid bare. "¡La venganza es de todas!" is not an anthem, it is a rallying call. (FF)
(Discos Sense Nom)

OUTER MINDS – "Behind the Mirror" LP

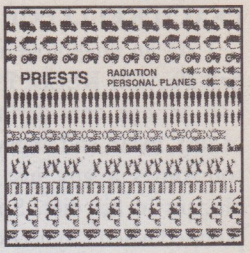
OUTER MINDS have released an LP that actually deserves the tag of psychedelic garage punk. Other one-trick ponies pile on gang vocals and limp swirls only to end up crowned Kings of the Freakout overnight. These guys force nothing, other than attention to infectious songs that actually allow for tinges and deviations. Captured with a proper fuzz quotient, *Behind the Mirror* should be the next destination for fans of strange '60s-inspired garage, punkily executed in the here and now. (MC)
(FDH / Red Lounge / Resurrection)

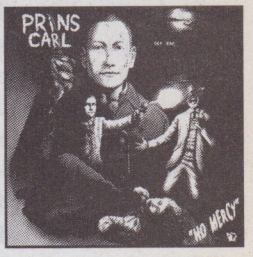
PARQUET COURTS –"American Specialties" LP

I am reviewing this just after getting puked on by a dachshund. *American Specialties* was previously released on cassette, but now this band has been anointed worthy by the blog-rocker types, so here's some vinyl! I am literally covered in dog vomit, and listening to this is not improving my life right now. I can see why they are popular—they sound like a million kids' record collections in one band. TYVEK, SWELL MAPS, PAVEMENT, GUIDED BY VOICES particularly come to mind, though it errs on the punker/post-punker side of those sound ideas. I think you will like this maybe? I am pretty sure you will unless maybe you only like porno grind D-beat goth pop rock. Well, at least if you want a band's sort of rollicking bedroom-style recordings, spurts of fuzzy guitar and a million parts and ideas inserted into every song… I think if I was wanting this sort of thing, I would just reach for my TYVEK records, but this band has a youthful energy that is appealing, plus they live in Brooklyn and not Detroit so probably will appeal to more fans through that alone. I am not totally won over. It's not like they are *bad* or *dull*, I can clearly see why they are a good band that excites the youth. I am just not excited. It just makes me wanna listen to the SWELL MAPS' Peel Session instead. (LG)
(Play Pinball)

PASSING PHASES – "Endless Autumn" 12"

PASSING PHASES are a solid pop band. They have a style that is somewhere between garage pop and fuzzed-out indie rock. I can hear some REPLACEMENTS, SUPERCHUNK, NIRVANA and maybe some DINOSAUR JR. vibes in these jams. The guitar player has some dope big-muff-style tones on this thing that remind me of *Beyond Living* at times. The songs are catchy and the production is legit, and I think a lot of people would like this record. Good job. (TM)
(Cricket Cemetery)





PEACH KELLI POP – LP

I am an unapologetic fan-boy of Allie's first PEACH KELLI POP LP, which many find strange considering my normal go-to of fast, mean and angry hardcore punk, but sometimes a guy just needs a little bubblegum in his diet. So yeah, I was pretty pumped when Layla texted me that I got this for review. The first thing that pops out is the heightened production values that add a sugary (nay, codeine-like) high to the tunes and envelope all the instruments and vocals like a sticky pillow. Much like the first one, this second self-titled LP is built on that '60s girl-group-ness, but she has also incorporated new additions of weirdness ("Society of Enoch") and speed ("Scorpio") on some tracks. In the end, I don't think anything will have that same sweeping impact on me like the first time I heard "Do the Eggroll," but as a whole, this LP is equally enjoyable as the first. It may even be better, but that first one is so burned into my brain at this point that only time will tell. Totally awesome. (JU)
(Bachelor)

PERKELE – "Voice of Anger" CD

Goddamn, this is the reissue of this Swedish band's full-length from back in 2001 and it's fucking awesome. These are some ill skinhead jams! This band has been around forever, but if you aren't familiar they play legit Oi! that is not unlike the TEMPLARS. These songs are catchy as fuck and I bet these dudes could beat the shit out of me and drink me under the table, no doubt. If you like Oi! you probably won't be mad at this. (TM)
(Spirit of the Streets)

PHOBIA / SUFFERING MIND – split 5"

Sometimes the format of the release can add to the experience of the music. It's rare but it happens every once in a while. This is the case with this two-song 5" from two of the best grindcore bands going. While I'm sure this is not the shortest release ever, it comes in at less than two minutes. It's packaged like a CD and limited to 666 copies. What do you get for your $$? Two of the best grindcore tracks of 2012. Both tracks are tight and blistering fast. It's as if someone said "Record your best track in under a minute and I'll put it out." There is no pause. There is no hesitation. Fucking go! (MH)
(Behind the Mountain)

PHOEBUS BEAT CLAN – "Reincarnation of the Circle Melts the Wheel" EP

These Swedes are in a world of their own: "Angler Fish Mishap" expounds on visions of bubblegum fuck machines… need I say more? Well, yes. There's just a whole lotta shit goin' on here: very slick, borderline hi-octane guitars darting across songs that initially reach for something akin to DEMON'S CLAWS but end up far more theatric. It's all very manic, vaguely stoned, very inventive and entirely schitzo. Not something I'd repeatedly reach for, but it's still a very interesting single. (MC)
(De Nihil)

PRIESTS – "Radiation/Personal Planes"

This is political in a distraught sense but not a mission sense. As if there is no clear theory or objective or stance, it's just ranting over guitars that stay surfing through the swamp. It's disturbed and upset and distressed and angry but it all stays hinged, and this is exactly why it works so well. Instead of a controlled preach or a total chaos freakout, this record is a perfect portrayal of anxiety, the kind where you're at a party and trying to keep it together, but man, everything is so fucked up. The lyrics center on materialism and how everything will kill us at some point, the drums and guitar build up but always break at a point just before total crazed rage. Like everything gets together and gets riled up but then gives up and sits on the couch. But it's perfect; it makes the rage seem real. (MM)
(SPR, no info)

PRINS CARL – "No Mercy" CD

It's always funny when bands have anti-racist songs, but still have songs that promote domestic violence and sexism. Do you really want equal rights for all? Or just men? Straight men or all of them? Anyway, these are twelve songs of gruff-voiced, straightforward street punk on this disc. There are hints of BLITZ and LEATHERFACE, but not an ounce of their genius. If you like the first song, you're gonna like every song on here, because they mostly sound the same. (GH)
(Noise of Sweden)

PROTO KIDS – "You're Such a Waste/ What Did I Expect?"

I like this. When I first dropped the needle on the record (the stylus on the wax, for you hipsters), I was a little unsure, but it's growing on me. It's mid-tempo and catchy and all that, but it's also pretty stripped back and raw. You can actually hear the bass in this record. I can't always say that. Yeah, now I am really digging it. Side "beta" picks up right where side "alpha" left off. I think this is best described as trashy punk rock with pop influences. Or maybe it's fuzzy pop punk. Whatever you want to call it, this one is worth looking for. (KK)
(Push My Buttons)

RAMMA LAMMA – "Gang/We All Know"

Stupid rockarolla pubrock, with shit lyrics, yet toe tapping and hellsa catchy. "We All Know" is pretty DONNAS with better RUNAWAYS vocals. The end of this track is a rad jam out, that is a good reminder that rock'n'roll came from the fucking blues, dickheads… The songs are catchy. I bet there are a lot of striped shirts at these shows. These fools could easily play with GIUDA or some incarnation of SLADE. (MB)
(Dusty Medical)

RAS – "Blue" LP

Bold and glammy Swedish punk with enough unexpected twists and turns to make jaded listeners like me sit up and take notice. The A-side kicks off in fine form, sounding something like a Scandi TEMPLARS or another '70s-influenced street punk act (plus spacey synths and other fun effects). The B-side is a bit of a letdown after the creative chops displayed on the first half, but it's a fun listen all the same. (JH)
(Push My Buttons)

RAS – "Yellow" LP

I had a little bit on confusion when I started reviewing this LP because there was another record in the stack that looked exactly the same. This one has a yellow sticker announcing the band name on the cover, whereas the other has a blue sticker. It turns out that RAS released two LPs simultaneously and made them look really similar. If you know me, you know that I like melodic punk, especially the Scandinavian stuff. This Swedish band dishes it out expertly, but also incorporates some synth sounds that are part *Stukas*-era DICKIES and part REZILLOS. While the songs are incisively tight and perfect, the vocalists tunefully scream over it to give the whole thing a raw feel. The songs practically jump off the vinyl. The atmospheric noises between songs really tie the whole thing together and make for a cohesive LP. This is excellent. Features members

of MANIKINS and HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE for those of you that keep track of these things. (GH)
(Skrammel)

RATIONAL ANIMALS – "Cross Eyed Delights/ Way After Midnight"

Wow, there's a lot going on with this single. The A-side is a very riff-heavy melodic ripper that sounds like more of a '90s throwback than a straight-up hardcore song. The flip is a weird, bluesy '86-FLAG-style track that blew my mind just now. These dudes have got that Ginn riffing and Rollins vocals down very solidly. Probably the most blatant and legitimate BLACK FLAG worship tune I've heard. Sick! RATIONAL ANIMALS are one of the more original hardcore bands going right now, so you should buy this record, and all their other records while you're at it. (TM)
(Katorga Works)

RATSAK – "20th Century Bricolage" EP

A mixture of street punk and garage spewing forth from Australia. These guys have a sound that's not terribly dissimilar to BITS OF SHIT. The main difference is that RATSAK aren't really doing anything interesting on these four tracks. Gruff vocals complemented by boring riffs and no real hooks to speak of. Instantly forgettable. (KM)
(12XU)

RAYGUN – "Pommeja Taivaalta" 12"

Raw, jerky Finnish hardcore—the A-side was recorded last spring, but tracks from the flip date back to 1993 and 2006. The older songs are a little catchier, but in an almost poppy way (except "Atomikkahvila," a killer Oi!-tinged screamer), while the new side is just stripped-down, fist-banging Finnish hardcore (that ironically sounds more rooted in lost decades than the old stuff). Top notch. (WN)
(Kämäset Levyt)

RECIDE – "Statues" EP

Abrupt, disjointed, noisy hardcore that sounds like it's influenced by both DEEP WOUND and the current crop of Youth Attack bands that I don't care to list. This is thinking man's hardcore; there are parts that are straightforward and will make you want to mosh, but they end just as soon as they begin. That's my main issue with this record—it's clear that these guys put a lot of time and effort into creating tunes with odd structures, but it feels like they often overcomplicate things and, in the process, sacrifice some intensity. Listening to this, I can't help but feel that RECIDE wants to sound like ECOLI, but aren't quite able to tap into the primitive sound that made that band so great. I'd definitely recommend checking this record out, however, as it is downright violent at times and held my attention through repeated listens. (KM)
(Even Worse)

REIVERS – "Sympathetic Shock" LP

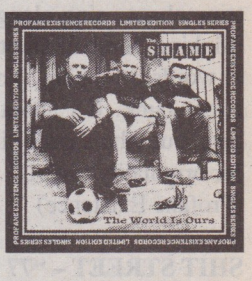
This is a good follow up 12" by this Oakland, CA band to their 2011 7". This is fast '90s-sounding hardcore, tinged with some melodic guitar leads and a crusty sound, but don't be fooled by that description—this is not long waxing epic eurocrust with lute intro and shit. The riffage here is driving, with pummeling drums and vocals reminiscent of Saira from famed bands DETESTATION and QUESTION, with a higher-pitched, throaty and brutal delivery. There are some deep back-ups here and there that perfectly compliment the main vocals, which I believe are some of the greatest I have heard in a while. This is a good record, but if you want to get the full effect, see them live…they do not disappoint. (MB)
(Vendetta)

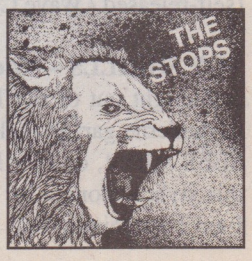
REPETITOR – "Dobrodošli na Okean" CD

A trio of youngsters from Serbia, counting two ladies on bass and drums, one chap on guitar and vocals, one debut in 2008, very cool silver and black artwork and lots of infectious tracks contained within. This starts off with a pretty darn powerful guitar riff, strong drums and tense harmonies, continuing down the elaborate road of FUGAZI-esque post-hardcore for nine tracks of inspired grungy punk. Genre-crossing and inventiveness have always been characteristic of the Balkan sound and this is no exception. Retaining the fuzzy reverb of outfits like MUDHONEY, while also channeling the off-kilter lunacy of SONIC YOUTH, this is all about the powerful, urgent delivery. This is the kind of sonic impulse that itches beneath the surface, egging to be let loose—wild, dire and direct. Released on Slovenia's Moonlee records, a label well worth your time and attention. The Balkans is a hotbed for punk and Belgrade is in the middle of it, and this is a very bright and promising band that I can't wait to hear more from! (LA)
(Moonlee)

SÄRKYNEET – "Kaupungin Kutsu" 12"

Someone has to coin a term for bands that have the "three dudes in leather jackets plus a lady singer" look. There are a million of them these days, and they're all from Scandinavia and Finland (the latter in this particular case). Perhaps I'll call on you, the reader, to create a name for this phenomenon. Based purely on their band photo, I'd say these guys look cooler than VANNA INGET, but not cooler than TERRIBLE FEELINGS. But all joking aside, this is sonically one of the best LPs I've listened to all month. They have that infectious melodic rock sound like their MASSHYSTERI-influenced friends, but theirs is noticeably different. They have this airy dreamlike aspect to them. Feels like they borrow equal amounts from BLONDIE and SHOP ASSISTANTS. Have you listened to your GIRLS AT OUR BEST records (and enjoyed them) in the last few months? If the answer is yes, track down this LP on the quick! (FS)
(Combat Rock Industry)





SCUTCHES – "Ten Songs, Ten Years" LP

This is the type of record that gives pop punk a bad name. The SCUTCHES combine the worst elements of ALKALINE TRIO and LIMP into something truly frightening. Seriously, this is music for the Disney Family Channel. Fucking terrible. (JF)
(Bright and Barrow)

THE SHAME – "The World is Ours" EP

Regular purchasers of Profane Existence releases might be surprised when they slap this first installment of their new limited edition singles series on the turntable: the SHAME are not crust, doom metal, D-beat, thrash or hardcore of any description. I could be going out on a limb, but is this their first Oi! release? Anyway, what you get from this trio of Tulsa baldies are four triumphant sing-alongs about working, drinking, football and the struggle—in other words, stomping, plodding, unapologetic street punk. It's about as unoriginal as it gets, but who's really looking to Oi! music for originality? (AM)
(Profane Existence)

SHIT STREET – "77 Dead" EP

This four-piece Helsinki band pushes through four tuneful, mid-paced punk tunes on their first EP, after being a band for over four years! They sing in English, but the guitar melodies and overall mood remind me of a little more polished and slicker INSOMNIO or NO ESCAPE. The vocals are super snotty, but sung. Not a bad debut effort. (MA)
(Älävittukitise!)

SHORTWAVE PARTY – "Where to Begin/Hopeless"

Jangly pop music partially influenced by alt country and partly influenced by the SMITHS, but with bombastic vocals that wouldn't sound outta place in a '90s ska band... like SAVE FERRIS. This seems like a debut 7" where the band is still establishing their music identity. You can hear each individual member's proclivities, but the songs don't always sound cohesive. (P$)
(self-released / Wave Cave)

THE SHRILLS – "Meltdown" LP

Straight out of the TY SEGALL school of moderne garage rock. Or is it THEE OH SEES school, or JAY REATARD's? Yeah, this style is done a lot these days. Not that I am complaining that much. I like it more than rap-metal or jazz-fusion or pop punk. It just gets kind of same-y, especially when you know someone who already does it better. In case you haven't deduced, the SHRILLS play distorted music with echo-y vocals and pounding drums performed at a frantic pace. There is some screeching and some of the songs sound as if they weren't really finished. It's all nice enough. (CK)
(Resurrection)

THE SLEEPERS – "Painless Nights" LP

This is the only record by this late-'70s, early '80s San Francisco band and what a fucking jam! In the vein of early punk and tinges of what would become known to us as darker and beat driven post-punk. The guitar is melodic and minimal, switching between sweepy and jaunty. It is no wonder that this is the same guitar that created distinct sounds for TUXEDOMOON. The bass can get a lil' funky and works well within the negative space created by the guitar. The vocals are sung in an aching style, yet still carry pitch perfectly as it climbs octaves. This singer's style is a great match to the music. I can't help but think of the shitty subpar bands that were playing around the same time as SLEEPERS and wonder why this band is not as well known. The amount of experimentation on this record, yet the ability of this band to self-edit creating this LP, is a fucking wonder. This band is prophetic in sounds that have now become segregated into genres and scenes. I was born in the wrong time. Great record. (MB)
(Superior Viaduct)

SNUFF – "5-4-3-2-1...Perhaps?" CD

The first studio effort in ten years. So, we'd better rewind a little. In the late '80s, SNUFF burst onto a somewhat decaying/fraying UK punk/hardcore scene, and gave it a not-so-subtle shot to the bollocks by combining the best of US hardcore (MINOR THREAT, ARTICLES OF FAITH), the finest of Brit pop-punk (BUZZCOCKS, EATER), infectious sing-along choruses, a dash of cranked up R&B (à la WHO), and horns, hammond organ, and two-tone (SPECIALS on speed), all with an infectious, irreverent wit, gobs of attitude, and heaps of tunes—and melody the likes of which have never been bettered. Yup, they were that good. That groundbreaking. That influential. So, do they still have it? Of course! The main-man singer/songwriter has been keeping busy in a variety of other musical projects, so it's not like he's lost it or is just rehashing past glories (plentiful though they are). SNUFF is kind of like the RAMONES in that they manage to keep it fresh while churning out hit after hit, yet all the time sounding, well, distinctively like themselves. They've never had a mediocre record. And this is no different. An instant classic. Welcome back, lads. (RK)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

THE STEREO STATE – "Crossing Canyons" CD

A six-track 10" from this self-described "rock and roll band from Massachusetts." The brand of rock they've chosen to roll with is what was called melodic hardcore in the '90s (if you can cast your mind back to a previous century). Very reminiscent (in a good enough way) of SAMIAM, lots of driving/chiming guitars. Not as anthemic and sing-along as AVAIL, but you get the drift. Lots of emotion/angst poured on thick, but suitably sung and not screamed. If that sounds appealing to the nostalgic, or uninitiated, it's probably because it largely is. Still works for me. (RK)
(Creator-Destructor)

THE STOPS – "Wait For Today" EP

Awesome new EP out on Residue from these Northwest badasses! Classic-sounding and clear, Ruby's vocals give this record such a timeless feel. If you like HARUM SCARUM, SIGNAL LOST or NUCLEAR FAMILY, or if you are just down for some dark, anthemic and melodic hardcore that gets under your skin, do not delay in getting your hands on this—copies are limited! (FF)
(Residue)

STREET EATERS – 12"

Heads up punks, if you wanna cover "That's How I Escaped My Certain Fate," look up the story about its recording and don't try to match all of those weird yells in the background. It just makes your version sound cheesy. This 12" came out in Germany for STREET EATERS' European tour and may actually only be available through them for US folks. The songwriting on this record is very much in line with their previous releases. For those unaware, that means guitarless, driving punk with melodic vocals and lots of vocal harmonies as well as some fuzz. The bass sound has come a long way and now sounds great, with more depth, fuzz and variety. Overall, despite be-

ing short (four originals, two covers), this record is better than their previous LP and warrants acquiring. (LP)
(Cut the Cord That…)

SUBSERVIENT FUCK – "Kill" EP

A gnarly debut marred by some substandard recording, SUBSERVIENT FUCK from New Orleans do the angry hardcore thing better than most—metallic overtones, some pissed-off blasting and a palpable sense of frustration with modern life. Nearly every song is written in the second person, and boy is this band disappointed in *you*. I like my hardcore raw and blown out as fuck (who doesn't?), but unfortunately this just sounds like the guitar tracks were horribly clipped and then digitally compressed down to total chunky shit quality...the results are near unbearable, especially on headphones. Too bad, because the songs themselves are pretty killer, with appropriately filthy vocals and some FX-laden noise solos that fuckin' rip. I would love to see this band live; hopefully the next record will live up to the material they're writing. (WB)
(Human Resources)

SUPREME COMMANDER – "Paper Tigers" 12"

I recall listening to this band's early material when I was living in Maryland and thinking it sucked, so it came as no surprise that this album is also pretty terrible. SUPREME COMMANDER plays a fairly abhorrent mixture of Fat-Wreck-style pop punk, crossover and hardcore. Every city has countless bands like this that play isolated bar shows that no one actually into punk would ever attend. Awful. (KM)
(Basement)

TACO LEG – 12"

"For fans of EDDY CURRENT, BIKINI KILL and SIDE BY SIDE" says the piece of paper accompanying this. I would add MODERN LOVERS, Erin Smith from BRATMOBILE's guitar style, the FALL, SWELL MAPS, SHITTY LIMITS, VENOM P. STINGER, BLACK TIME. It is a relentlessly charming record, hard to figure out why you wanna listen to it over and over, but you do wanna listen to it over and over. Good walking-around music. I vote yes to TACO LEG. Their strange and compulsive sound makes its own world, exists on its own terms, stark and unrelenting yet joyous and goofy. (LG)
(Fan Death)

TEENAGE TRICKS – "Dangerous Details" LP

This is the debut LP from this London group. It ticks a lot of the boxes currently tickling the fancies of savvy punk aficionados the world over: raw KBD-esque production, post-punk elements, dark lyrics, etc. The sum of the parts is energetic and engaging, but over the course of the entire record the sound gets a little tiring. The singer's voice is somewhat shrill, and with the welcome exception of a brief piano interlude, he's basically screeching in your ear for half an hour solid. There's a girl's voice in the background that I'd love to hear more of. Something about this band makes me imagine what would have happened if IKARA COLT (UK band from a few years back) picked up some *Killed By Death* comps and a couple of JOY DIVISION records. Not *bad* at all—in fact I think a lot of you will like it—but these days I tend to quickly tire of boys in their 20s shouting at me. (AM)
(Pure Punk)

TEMPEST – "I/II"

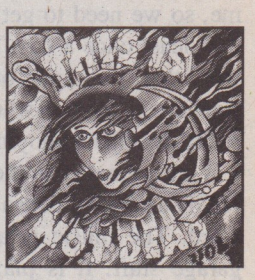
Starting off with a very powerful first track that sucks me in, TEMPEST live up to what their name implies: this rumbles like clouds during an electric storm. There is fitting use of a variety of styles and sounds, subtle motifs that run through the music (better articulating the deeper socio-political concepts expressed in the lyrics) and a sense of conviction—after anomie comes reaction. The "temperature" of the sound on this has the cold, nihilistic bleakness of black metal; the compositions have the analytical, canonic temperament of post-hardcore; and the striking, melodic quality never gets lost in the charged haze of fuzz and reverb. However, after summoning the storm on "I" on side A, the gloomy atmosphere continues to expand gradually on "II" on side B, coming to a more delicate close. This is just me, but I'm going to do this backwards—drift down the well-crafted soundscapes of "II" and then get pushed off the cliff, as all hells implodes below me in "I". (LA)
(Forged in Iron / Vitriol)

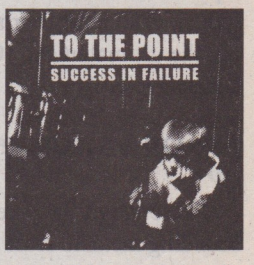
THE THINGZ – "Step Right Up" LP

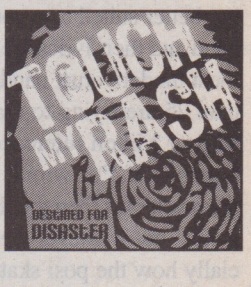
Step Right Up is a carnival-themed exercise in basic garage, entirely punkless, lacking character or even inept charm. I usually have a soft spot for "wacky" garage, providing there's at least a punk element and something deviant or fucked bubbling beneath the surface. All the THINGZ offer up is traditional, flub-free chum with cutesy jokes. Shitty. (MC)
(Coffee Addict)

TO THE POINT – "Success in Failure" EP

This is TO THE POINT's second EP and also their second one-sided EP. It's both extremely difficult and easy to explain why TO THE POINT is so good. They write songs. Sure, sure, I could explain how they are powerviolence but that would be too simple. I could explain that they contain ex-members of ACTUARY, FETUS EATERS, LACK OF INTEREST and SPAZZ. I could explain that they sound a bit like LACK OF INTEREST but all of that is irrelevant. TO THE POINT take powerviolence, LACK OF INTEREST and straight up hardcore and write damn good songs. To be honest, there is a vague posi-core or straight edge feel to them, in particular the lyrics to "In It for Life" and "Faces of Meth." One of the best EPs of 2012. Get this. (MH)
(Deep Six)







TOUCH MY RASH – "Destined for Disaster" CD

Local pop punk that never really excited me. The name rings a bell so I may have reviewed their first CD. Certainly not bad but the lyrics don't really pull off the silly thing well and the off-key vocals can be a little hard to take. I would say very mid-'90s pop punk like Fat Wreck Chords and Lookout! type stuff. There are plenty of bands that do this stuff much better, so this is best for friends and locals. (RL)
(Bittersick International)

THE ULTIMATEMOST HIGH – "Killer Wolf" EP

The name of this band is so stupid that I have to say it is the best band name I have heard in a while. Why "ultimatemost" isn't already part of the punk lexicon is beyond me, so we need to get it there. Start using it at least once a day. It is just the type of word that would piss off your parents, your teachers or anyone who likes to speak correctly. It is that annoying. With all that said, it is unfortunate that the ULTIMATEMOST HIGH as a band doesn't live up to that one word. The music is average hard-rockin' garage stuff. It is played fast and heavy. The singer has a decent voice with a bit of a punk whine. There is enough macho attitude to fill a least four muscle cars. It is just not the ultimatemost. (CK)
(High Society)

UNFAIR FIGHT – "We Are the Dead" EP

These guys are pretty raw and young sounding metallic crust from Las Vegas that I dig on. I'm making an assumption when I say young, but they have a song about skateboarding better suited to a youth crew or pop punk band and their lyrics are kind of general when most modern crust bands with members older than 25 are trying to cram as many Kierkegaard or Milton references into their songs as possible. If I'm wrong and you guys are all grim veterans then totally write in and call me a dick, but whatever the case, I liked it. Especially how the posi skateboarding jam comes right after a brutal crust number that trails off in a more melodic breakdown toward the end. The way they do that and a couple other things make me suspect that some of these dudes are listening to a bit of hardcore. The result is an aggro few tracks with a cool range that are fun to listen to if you're some kind of vest-wearing longhair. (BL)
(Crucial 45, no info)

UNION JACK – "New Ending Struggle" CD

This gets confusing. UNION JACK, with its British connotations, sounds a lot like HOT WATER MUSIC but they are actually from France. Huh, these guys have been around for a while apparently and they do the melodic emo thing. I'm hearing HOT WATER MUSIC, BIFFY CLYRO and a touch of RANCID. This is pretty good as they pull off whatever they are trying to do with a song. These guys could be pretty big with some international exposure. A good full-length, with William Burroughs on the cover. (RL)
(Beer)

UPPGÅNG OCH FALL – "Partyt Är Över" EP

OK, this band is from Sweden (Malmo, to be exact) and they play that kind of clean-guitar, melodic punk with intricate bass lines that the kids all love (I am one of those kids). One could make a direct comparison to MASSHYSTERI, but the singing is a lot rawer…a lot more screamy, but still retaining loads of melody. There's a lot of room to play this kind of music badly, but this band makes none of those mistakes. This is a vinyl pressing of the band's demo from last year and it is flawless. I am really looking forward to hearing more from this band in the future. P.S. They include the chords to all the songs in the lyric sheet so that you can play along in your bedroom. (GH)
(Instigate / Smuts / Rundgång)

UTANFÖRSKAPET – "Vildhjärta" 12"

There's something so comforting and wonderfully fantastic about hearing the return of Tommy "T.B." Bergen of ASOCIAL/UNCURBED on the microphone. He's one of the most distinctive and underrated vocalists of Swedish hardcore with a predictable brute ferocity, and this haunting, hollow abrasiveness is balanced by his boisterousness and steady delivery. Here singing entirely in Swedish (with no translation provided), he's backed by former members of CROSSING CHAOS, SVART PARAD, UNCURBED and ASOCIAL on this debut of UTANFÖRSKAPET (meaning "Exclusion"), *Vildhjärta* (meaning "Wild Heart"). The ten tracks crash steady and solid rock-infused D-beat hardcore, recalling some of the best moments of UNCURBED's late-'90s/early-'00s output on Sound Pollution (some of the best hardcore of that era, Swedish or otherwise). The slightly rougher mixed recording has a really upfront guitar sound that focuses on the riffing and leans more on the chaotic; perhaps this recording choice makes the record a slight less catchy in the parts where melody interweaves through pounding D-beat, but there's such solidity to how everything else punches and you're dragged along by sheer momentum. Fantastic. (KS)
(Fight Back / Rawby)

VERSKLAVEN – 12"

Dark raw punk with metallic undertones, harsh-as-fuck vocals and a late '90s crust vibe. I could see VERSKLAVEN playing with punk bands, metal bands or grind bands, given the versatility of their sound. Pretty fucking devastating cries from Dominique with equally dark lyrics that are rather spine-chilling. (KR)
(Torture Garden)

HOLLY BETH VINCENT – "Hey Boy/ Smash"

Sometimes I think it might be better to review records in a vacuum, to know nothing about the band members, their history, what it is they're trying to accomplish—nothing. For example, if I didn't know that HOLLY BETH VINCENT is the Holly from HOLLY AND THE ITALIANS, how much differently would I feel about this record? Would I like it more? Would I like it less? Ah, but these are philosophical questions for another time. For now, we'll deal with the record at hand. It's good. It's probably even real good, but it's not great. It's catchy. It's pretty. It's melodic. It's pop music. It's got a little fuzzy guitar going on in the background, but let's face it, the showcase here is the vocals. It's probably a little too "produced" for my taste, but it's good. All that said, I'm glad HOLLY is still making music. (KK)
(Ramo)

VIOLENT BULLSHIT – "Adult Problems" 12"

This is a bunch of people from '90s emo bands (along with a one-time member of BATTERY, no shit) playing fast hardcore with wacky, high-pitched vocals, dramatic riffs, the occasional solo and an updated CHARLES BRONSON sense of humor and NYC irony (both in a good way, in this case). Basic riffing that's good for a bit but gets tiresome over the course of an entire LP.

While I wouldn't buy this record, I would definitely go see and later get into trouble with this band. I thoroughly appreciate that they have a song called "Seattle Fuck Off," because that city fucking sucks. (DG)
(self-released)

WAREHOUSE VALUE – "Fucked Up on Lo-Fi" EP

Just like the title suggests, raw blasts of low-fidelity hardcore. This short-lived project only played a handful of shows around the turn of the millennium (well before this brand of blown-out HC was back en vogue in the US), but managed to record a heaping mess of songs, nine of which are on this ripping slab. Early Scandinavia would be proud, and my ears are happy. (WN)
(Mike Fitzgerald)

WARTORN – "Domestic Terrorist/Under Oath"

Epic crust put out by Profane Existence for their limited edition single series on clear vinyl. WARTORN are from Wisconsin and have had a slew of releases over their almost decade-long existence. They play the music you expect to hear on a band released by Profane Existence—crusty and political with a strong D-beat backbone. The drums are violently driving, the guitar metallic, the vocals are yelled with guttural backup vocals. If you're into epic blackened crust, this release is for you. The "Domestic Terrorist" side is solid with a Midwest epic intro that leads well into wailing guitar and brandishing D-beat. This is nothing new, but is another solid release for those into crust and other Profane type releases. (AE)
(Profane Existence)

WYMYNS PRYSYN – "Waste Your Life/Keep it Simple"

I'm still lost on the whole boy-band-using-woman-in-their-name thing, but whatever. Who is that appealing to? This is kinda rad whiny indie college punk stuff. Like they want to have a tough, punky edge and not be grown ups, but they are too smarmy so you know they are faking the tough thing. Hahaha, the B-side made me think of the STROKES. Sorry bros. I mean, it's like punk shit, but they use that one STROKES vocal effect because the singer doesn't like to hear his own voice. This is actually pretty rad. Hand-numbered out of 300 with download code. Give it up! (GB)
(Pygmy)

XAXAXA – "Siromasni i Bogati" CD

The revolution summer is apparently still burning strong, and in Macedonia of all places. This is the second album from these guys and while the songs are pretty subtle, I actually found myself enjoying this record after a couple listens. Musically this sounds to me like RAIN with Carlos Rodriguez from BOOM BOOM KID singing. The hooks probably won't grab you the first time around, but they are there, and become more evident with every listen. Although there is quite a bit of sameness, riff wise, this album has a great aesthetic overall. A good CD to pop on if you're into late '80s Dischord bands, or if the sun is shining and you're too hungover to listen to ear-shattering noise. (KM)
(Moonlee)

THE YOUNG IDEA – "Warpaint" EP

A band that for the most part makes mediocre ska. It's pretty much by-the-numbers but so is about 98% of all other ska. The YOUNG IDEA try to (or accidentally) set themselves apart by adding in a surf sound (i.e. they do some by-the-numbers surf guitar tricks) and the B-side has a super poppy punk sound, but I have to wonder why anyone would listen to this. Honestly, why? "Crash / Like the wave on the beach / Crash / Like the wave in my speech." (MH)
(Chapter 11)

YOUTHBITCH – "Don't Fuck This Up!" LP

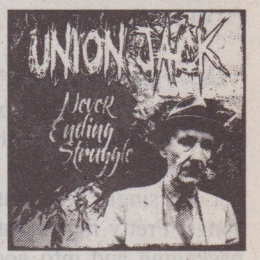
I was well prepared to dismiss this record as completely valueless, but the song "Just Like Elvis," which is about wanting to die on the toilet, is mildly amusing. So now, all I can say is this record is valueless power pop punk with the exception of the song "Just Like Elvis." Mostly it sounds like lame NOBUNNY but with a kind of eighth-rate MARKED MEN aspect, but devoid of any of the hooks or charm of either. Please stop crooning about how you feel like you're retarded (taken directly from the lyrics!). (LP)
(Jonny Cat)

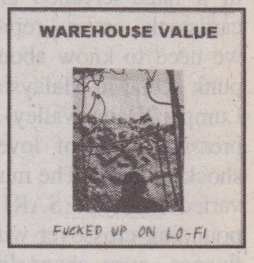
ZYANOSE – "Isolation" EP

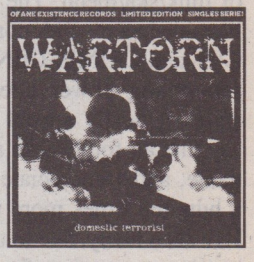
Full-on noise assault. The A-side is a pure inaudible combination of filth noise consisting of bass, static, screams and hard drums. The B-side tracks are the same songs as the A-side, but the final mix is less distorted and more reminiscent of the first two EPs. This band is always pushing boundaries and is not just another noise clone (as they are part of the last true wave of noise filth), but a very masterful seething cauldron of raw pogo noise perfection. Distortion frenzy, chaos noise has not been 100% killed by hype and punk hipsterism yet if ZYANOSE is continuing to diminish our hearing through a vinyl massacre like this here record. (AE)
(Distort Reality)

V/A – "La Force Dans la Oi!" EP

I adored the MARABOOTS 7" from a little ways back so I am coming in with high hopes for this comp. Coincidently, MARABOOTS leads this thing off with a catchy-as-hell Oi! tune, continuing to spread the gospel that French Oi! and street punk was, is and forever shall be the best and catchiest shit going. The







tracks that follow by LARCIN and LION'S LAW (the MARABOOTS vocalist's other band) are more typical and slightly less catchy Oi!, though still of a finer quality than most skinhead shit going these days. I had never heard LARCIN before, and their tune is especially great. The final cut by the FANATIQUES is almost more of power pop number but still has plenty of that street swagger. All in all, a cool comp. (JU)
(UVPR Vinyles)

V/A – "Houston Punk" CD

I guess if you are from Houston (Texas, I assume) and you like gritty punk you should have this. This CD is tracked so that you get one single 27-minute track of 14 bands/songs. Pretty much just a slipcase as far as packaging and info goes, too. If this is intentional, it is an ill-conceived concept. So we range from crusty punk to drunk punk, to goth punk to hardcore. It is what it is, too much trouble to figure out which section is which band. (RL)
(Agrowax)

V/A – "Klang Valley Scene Report 2012" EP

Wow, I'm holding something really special here: it's a four-song 7" comp and a handsome 64 page, 6.5" x 8.5" zine housed in a hand-screened and numbered heavy cardstock cover—representing everything we need to know about the DIY hardcore/punk scene in Malaysia (specifically Kuala Lumpur/Klang Valley). Jeez, what an impressive labor of love. I'm in awe (and shock), indeed! The music here is extremely varied in style: SARJAN HASSAN does pounding crossover with an '80s thrash influence, even channeling some early METALLICA! PUSHER does a strange hybrid of funk/ska/metal. The GARRISON sounds like a sincere and non-commercial RANCID, and CRIMESCENE spews forth mind-scrambling powerviolence. None of these styles typically appeal to me, but I should say that all four tracks are at the top of their game, and I appreciate the fuck out of this a hundred times more than nearly anything I've seen lately, due to the sheer honesty and passion emanating from this release. Not-for-profit, DIY, lovingly created, inspiring release! (MA)
(Shock & Awe)

V/A – "Nihilistic Orbs Sampler" CD

This is a collection of material released by a Melbourne-based label called Nihilistic Orbs and it appears that all of the artists represented are from there as well. The two tracks by NUN appear on a 7" reviewed in this issue so they aren't discussed here. Nearly every group represented employs synthesizers, drum-machines and vocals as instrumentation. As far as gloomy, hyper-artificial, negative-wave operating as unabashed pastiche of the obvious 1980s reference points of that style, this collection is great. WHITE HEX, side project of the guitarist in SLUG GUTS, is a standout, being one of the only groups to showcase guitar melody. The leads lend it a sense of inventiveness that isn't found in most of the other tracks, which is a shame because it is just as possible to create melodies like that on keys. A track from JONNY TELAFONE entitled "Ceremony" is a particular pleasure, with its more industrial-damaged synthesizer manipulation and a very effective vocal delivery. The strongest track on this compilation, called "Acid Perm" by SKY NEEDLE, comes at the very end, though, and resembles none of the others. Above a barely synchronized loop of beeps, buzzes and electronics, female vocals scat nonsensically while the rhythms degenerate. (SL)
(Nihilistic Orbs)

V/A – "Shredded Wheat Vol. 2" CD

A label sampler from Harvest King records, a DIY collective operating from the prairies of Western Canada. Mostly made of cuts from previous HK releases along with a few new tracks, there's a wide range of styles here leaning towards the more melodic, polished side of punk and hardcore—you could imagine more than a few of these bands working their way up to a release on Epitaph—while some of it goes into straight-up alt rock territory (I'm looking at you, THESE ESTATES, yeesh). Not exactly the kind of music I go for these days, but there's some standout tracks by BORN WRONG, REHASHED and AMOUR FOU on the more aggressive side of things, and INVASION puts a nice screamotional touch on their track "Lost and Found." Nerds, you'll be happy to know the whole thing is available as a free download on that internet thing I keep hearing about. (WB)
(Harvest King)

V/A – "This Is Not Dead" EP

Hmmm… I confess I didn't ride up to the *MRR* compound tonight expecting to review *ska-punk!* This is a compilation of four bands, and two of them are of the ska persuasion. I happen to love ska and two-tone, but modern ska-punk (with the exception of OPERATION IVY) has always left me pretty cold. However, both HUB CITY STOMPERS and YOUNG IDEA had me tapping my feet and nodding along, if not actively skanking. The YOUNG IDEA song was actually an interesting amalgam of SUBLIME (in the ska parts) and YOUTH BRIGADE in the punk parts. UNIT SIX plays driving poppy punk with walking basslines that remind me of RANCID. My favorite band of the record, though, were the GESTALTS: their track "Vinyl Solution" is a great slice of catchy So-Cal beach punk, complete with Rikk Agnew-esque guitar leads. Overall, a game of two halves, but if you don't mind a bit of ska in your punk, this is a great little comp. (AM)
(This Is Not Dead)

V/A – "Turist I Tillvaron Vol. 5" LP

There's a long, rich "Really Fast" tradition of classic punk samplers from Sweden, showcasing new bands. This is the fifth volume in a series carrying on that vital tradition by presenting a track each from sixteen largely unknown and new bands from around the country. Offering great variation, this comp touches less on classic Swedish kang (off course it makes an appearance by bands like SPIKNYKTER, BLASLAMPA), and varies from everything to pop punk (an early Lookout records-ish sing-a-long punker with saxophone from GATANS LAG, a stripped down pop track driven by strong female vocals by the VOLCANO), straight forward USHC-influenced thrashings (NEDSLAGSPLATS, UX VILEHEADS—the only band here I'd ever heard of!), metallic hardcore, garagey punk (JEALOUS COWARDS round the comp out with a fantastic track more garagey on guitars than tone, akin to maybe some of the current Australian noise like EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING) and other permutations that combine elements of all of the above (a really great track by HJARTATTACK takes the VICIOUS-styled '77 mangling, gives it hardcore guitar thickness and comes out ahead, a track by UTBROTT is reminiscent of the complexity of say, Norwegian hardcore like STENGTE DORER or LIFE BUT HOW TO LIVE IT, where it varies from being kind of hardcore, kind of heavy, quirkily melodic with female vocals). Everything here is of take-notice quality and presented with an even-handed and well thought out flow. A sixteen-band compilation where maybe three-and-a-half of the bands bother printing lyrics in the gatefold sleeve, in favor of band pictures or meek art, kind of bums me out, as it seems like no one's got anything too vital to say. But this is outweighed positively by filtering through the latest (and probably a few soon to be greatest) of the current Swedish scene. (KS)
(Turist I Tillvaron)

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Fathers Day: www.fathersday.bandcamp.com
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Läjä: www.laja.com.br
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Nuclear Madness: www.nuclearmadness.wz.cz/novinky.html
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Shock & Awe!: www.shockawemedia.wordpress.com
Shogun: www.burnoutzine.net
Shortwave Party: shortwaveparty.bandcamp.com
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Smuts: smutsrekards@gmail.com
Solar Funeral: www.solar-funeral.org
Sonatine Produzioni: www.sonatineproduzioni.blogspot.com
Sones: Marina 63, Baixos L3, 08005 Barcelona, SPAIN, www.sones.es
Sorry State: www.sorrystaterecords.com
SPHC: www.SPHC.bigcartel.com
Spirit of the Streets: www.oi-punk.de
Stop 'N' Go: Jln. Mampang Prapatan 20, No. 12 JakSel 12760, INDONESIA, sng_zine@yahoo.com
Stupid Kids: M. Goujon Arnaud, Fragny, 58370 Villapourcon, FRANCE
Superfi: hwww.superfirecords.co.uk
Superior Viaduct: PO Box 193563, San Francisco, CA 94119, superiorviaduct.com
Surfin'ki: www.facebook.com/surfinkirecords
Texas is Funny: www.texasisfunny.com
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X-Mist: PO Box 1545, 72195 Nagold, GERMANY, www.x-mist.de

DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Amelia Eakins, Greg Harvester, Jeremy Meier, Mariam Bastani, Matt Badenhop and Robert Collins.

ABSTURMER – *Nuclear Hell* – Fast, sick, black metal thrash attacks, D-beat mayhem sprinkled with death/grind toppings. From the track names I can tell this is probably a side-project joke band, but I think it's pretty darn good either way. It has every element a hardcore/metal/crustie lover enjoys: blackened melodies, ripped vocals, blastbeats, metallic solos and constant headbanging! Maybe they sing about "War! Speed and Pizza" and even incorporate some spooky keyboards, but it still sounds awesome to my ears. (Lydia) (10-song cassette, no lyrics, Bezerker records, www.absturmer.bandcamp.com)

ANWAR SADAT – *Mutilation* – This band is blending post-punk and hardcore in a very unique way. It's dark and melodic, yet also hard and heavy. You can feel the pure power coming out of this two-song demo. The guitar tone is fantastic and the song composition is like none other. My only complaint here is how short this is. The tape ends right when I start to get a good feel for the songs. Post-punk as a genre has been thrown around a lot these days, but this really stands apart mostly because they have real hardcore elements. It's not sad goth music, it's dark and heavy, but still has ferocious elements. Plus the packaging is awesome. (Jeremy) (2-song cassette, lyrics included, thereisnovaction@gmail.com)

BLACK COFFEE – My sincerest apologies to the band for sitting on this for so long! This is straight, frills, angry, spiteful snotty hardcore with a rougher edge, from Canberra, Australia. This is no. Powerful drumming, catchy hooks and mean solos, topped with maniac vocals from the FAUX HAWKS singer. Makes me want to go wild in the pit! Fucking cool, black ink artwork of a broken mug with black coffee seeping through onto a white background. I'm afraid I have a shitty tape deck but the production sounds tight, warm and allows for all elements to break through with frenzy! Features members of I EXIST, HARD LUCK, A STAB IN THE DARK. All killer no filler, released on Bezerker records! Get this! (Lydia) (7-track cassette, lyrics included, www.gut-feeling.com/blackcoffee.html)

BLESSED STATE – Four piece from Western Mass with a heavy HUSKER DU meets DC post-hc thing going on, and very good at it might I add. The singing alternates between emotive hollering (no, not in an off-putting way) and confident singing—much in the way Bob Mould did. Also I'm a sucker for your rich sounding, chorus-y guitars, BLESSED STATE. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, blessedstatema.bandcamp.com)

THE BOMB'O'NYRICS – A four-woman Italian garage band signing in English. Simple, familiar sounding tunes highlighted by spunky vocals—half cutesy, half sassy. A fun listen despite my disinterest in the style. (Matt) (6-song cassette, no lyrics, welcomeintheshit@hotmail.it)

BURNING MONK – From Oakland California, BURNING MONK seem to have blended stoner riff-rock with wacky hardcore like FLAG OF DEMOCRACY – but through a very modern and slick digital presentation, and I find it to be quite annoying. (Matt) (6 song CD-R, no lyrics, burningmonkoakland@yahoo.com)

CASQUE – *Devour the Lion* – Raw, throat-ripping D-beat-ish black metal from Bloomington, IN, with a grim (so cool) silk-screened cover, with shades of silver and grey on black. The guitars hold some nice creepy elements, however the drumming at times is a bit too clean for my taste, but that's just me. The vocalist goes with the sore throat approach, which works wonders if you like it raw and dry. Misanthropists will never unite. Features members of KATA SARKA, released on Reality Is A Cult records. (Lydia) (4-song cassette, no lyrics, www.casqueindy.bandcamp.com)

DAMN BROADS – *Loud, Fast and In the Dark* – Four women from Connecticut blasting through eleven tracks of angry hardcore with a slick production. SPIDER CUNTS come to mind, minus the distinct New York attitude—yet DAMN BROADS snarl with an attitude of their own. Lots of catchy riffs, gang vocals, and confident lyric writing and delivery. Nice digipack with a lyric insert. Nice. (Matt) (11-song CD-R, lyrics included, damnbroads@gmail.com)

DEHUMANIZED – A filthy, raging and crushing hardcore/black metal oddity, with guitars that saw away through your bones and vocals that sounds like the singer is foaming at the mouth, spitting blood. Super fast, then pressingly slow, then eerily quiet, the madness contain here is hellishly divine. DEHUMANIZED need little reference to lovers of the obscure, the deranged and the vile. Featuring members of GRIMACE and HYSTERICS, if I am not mistake, this band is sadly no more. Mind-meltingly good and I presume now hard to find. (Lydia) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, no info)

DEMANDS – *Piss on your Wounds* – Blistering hardcore coming out of Washington DC. This shit is powerful! I could only imagine the live performance being beyond nuts. Strong elements of current hardcore bands like NO TOLERANCE and the RIVAL MOB. This tape is just non-stop crushing, hard ass shit solid song writing. Hopefully we will see a record soon. Highly recommended. DC is holding it down for the core right here. (Jeremy) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, jamesdoubek@gmail.com)

DISGUISE – USHC meets black metal vocals with tons of reverb! This is really ripping, but I wish there were less effects on the vocals because it almost sounds as if it is working separately from the rest of the band at times, which makes for less of a cohesive, destructive unit. This is a small gripe though. Overall, this band is playing expertly tight hardcore that will melt you face right off. (Greg) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, disguisepunk@gmail.com)

THE ESCAPIST – Melodic, dark and catchy anarcho-punk from Finland with a strong feeling of exasperation to it. Deep thought perpetuates this release, from the full sound of the productions and the detailed song construction, the elaborate artwork and pensive, sad lyrics. Each song has a profound quote below its title, including Wilde and Thoreau, and the artwork was inspired by Thomas Hobbes' book *Leviathan*. The ESCAPIST have evidently put a lot of thought into this and I can totally hear it with every track that progresses. My sincerest apologies to the band for taking so long to review this! Parta records and Ruori records helped them release this tape and you should check it out! (Lydia) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, sauli.okker@gmail.com)

FORCED INTO FEMININITY – *Messiah of Evil* – According to their enclosed letter, "this is a project stated in 2008 involving choreographed dancing, opera vocalizations, gender dysmorphia and narcissism." Basically, this tape resembles nothing relevant to what is usually reviewed and is not even bearable noise. At least it's not another DISCHARGE rip off, I'll give them that much. (Amelia) (8-song cassette, unreadable and incomplete lyrics included, $4 ppd, $5 band turtlenecks, J. Flanagan, 2319 W. 19th Street, Chicago, IL 60608)

G.A.S.H. – *Alive in Hell* – G.A.S.H. from Boston still send shivers down my spine in the way that only forbidden yakuza Japanese 1980s punk has the ability to do similar to the M.A.N. LP. This tape is an "advanced copy" from their release show played in Boston with ANASAZI. It was recorded live at BU on Devil's Night 2011 with a mysterious second guitarist, Skeleton Head. This is the only G.A.S.H. recording with his presence. The intent with this tape was to make a horrible racket for Devil's Night, with the hope that a handful of BU students could pick it up on their receivers. But, as we all know, no one listens to the radio anymore. If one listens closely through the distortion, scratching, screams, and fury- one can hear a circular saw, chains, and smashing glass. The second vocal track was recorded at Red Lantern in Portland in March 2012. Members of this band have no concept of time, as only true punks can exist properly—unconfined by social norms. This tape is menacing and violent in the most intimidating way. This tape contains unreleased tracks not on the demo or split flexi. (Amelia) (3-studio recordings and about 8-songs later, no lyrics included, PO Box 82, Somerville, MA 02143-9998)

GUILT PARTY – *Tropical Depression* – Tight as fuck, fast one-two-one-two punk with a vocalist that reminds me of the guy (that guy would be named Tab Man) from HOLY SHIT! Absolutely no bullshit and no brakes hardcore punk that is tough as fuck. Excellent! (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, Guiltparty.bandcamp.com)

HEMORAGE – *Prisoner of Hate* – Frantic metalcore from right here in the Bay Area. See, I wanna like this because if the DIY spirit in the production, lyrics, and great drawings in the layout,

but this style really doesn't do it for me. But yes, the playing is top notch, the screaming is desperate and frustrated, and the result comes from the heart, so thumbs up to em anyway. (Matt) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, hmrg666@gmail.com, 144 Harkness Ave, SF, CA 94134)

JAW CLENCHER – Hi-fi, noisy rad-fire hardcore with stark lyrics from New Jersey. It's got a good pulse, I can tell, and the urgency and aggression are there, but it's a bit too noisy for my taste. Wait, not a bit, but far too noisy. But y'all like it noisy so snatch it up. (Matt) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, $3 ppd, 2565 S. Chestnut St, Paulsboro, NJ 08066, www.hostileinput.com)

KOSZMAR – *Polska Dupa Demo '12* – Seven songs of pummeling raw as shit hardcore punk plus a cover from Polish greats MOSKWA. If I'm not mistaken, all songs are sung in Polish. High-energy, killer fucking demo easily comparable to current bands like, KRÖMOSOM and MAUSER... But this stands apart for sure. I have seen this band live and they completely destroy! Vancouver BC has a really good thing going for the punk community up there right now. Keep up the good work! Also, pro printed cassettes are always nice to have. (Jeremy) (8-song cassette. Lyrics included. koszmarpunk@gmail.com)

KURRAKÄ – Well assholes, here is the band to watch in the next year. All punk ladies Texas outfit with an umlaut in their band name playing some mid-tempo D-beat-inspired punk with a nod to the simpler times of early Spanish punk—or shit man… this just sounds like early fucking punk just before shit sped up and became Hardcore. Simple, with some good riffage and just enough distortion on the guitars, with a driving rhythm section—this sounds nasty and mean. The vocals are a touch too high-pitched than I dig on, but it fits the music and her raspy punk screams kill me. Lots of reverbed vocals with some effects, and she uses her voice as an instrument, I respect this lady… all of them actually. Sounds just like the singer of CRAITURAS; same lady? The lyrics are en Español so either get with the times and finally learn to speak it or get left (more) behind. I will be waiting for the 7" and I bet it's gonna slay. (Mariam) (4-song cassette, no lyrics, no info)

MAN BITES DOG – Coming from Tucson AZ MAN BITES DOG deliver (6?) Lo-fi, mosh worthy jams. All songs are mid-tempo hardcore hymns. This tape is short as shit, but 100% worth many listens. AZ hardcore has been popping off hard. Sad thing is the bands don't seem to stick around for very long. Find this demo, play it loud. *Break your Shit!* (Jeremy) (6?-song cassette, lyrics not included, facebook.com/manbitesdog)

MASS EXIT – Cool tape from a new non-predictable PDX band, who I hear contains folks from the often overlooked and great ASS END OFFEND. I'm thinking of DETONATORS and CHRIST ON PARADE when I listen, and I'm reading some great lyrics that challenge heteronormativity and hegememonic narratives within and outside the punk scene, our oppressive institutions, and, of course, cops. My only gripe is the lack of hooks – it kinda just goes and goes, but that's not necessarily a bad thing. Lovingly recorded by my pal Stan at Buzz Or Howl in Portland. (Matt) (7 song cassette, lyrics included, www.massexitpunk.com, 9464 N. Trumbull, Portland, OR 97203)

MURDER CITY HOOLIGANS – *Another Fucken Demo* - Burly Oi from South Australia. Nothing groundbreaking, but there's a certain looseness to the playing that gives it a special charm. Sounds like a cover band, but these three tracks, "Get Up, Get Out," "Riot," and "Skins Are Back" are originals. (Matt) (3 song CD-R, no lyrics, Barry Smith, Unit 1, 833 Marion Road, Mitchell Park, South Australia 5043, Australia)

NO CHILDREN – *Live at Sports Bar Demonstration Cassette* – Gnarly hardcore with throaty INFEST vocals. This is what hardcore punk is supposed to sound like—desperate and with purpose. They claim to have recorded this demo in a room filled with cat poo and I'm not typically one to call a punk a liar—especially a punk who can whip guitar licks like this out of their pants. Fast, aggressive and filled with an urgency that too much punk lacks…this band seems to have been an Albany, New York outfit that is not scattered around the Midwest, but you'd better hope that they keep playing. And you'd better track down this demo. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, $4ppd, Z. London, 3052 S. Keely Apt. 2, Chicago, IL 60608, computercontrol1984@yahoo.com)

ORANGE SODA – *Cannibal Lover* – One of four cassingles released for Halloween, each one donned in orange/black/white covers/tapes with spooky drawings, hand numbered and dark sounding or Halloween themed exclusive songs. Oh yeah, and they're all Southern Illinois bands. ORANGE SODA's tracks have a heavy MISFITS vibe with pseudo Danzig crooning. The B-side is actually the winner for me as it's a little more original sounding. (Matt) (2-song cassette, lyrics included, Spotted Race, 21 W Garfield, Belleville, IL 62220)

PENETRATE – Claustrophobic dark and heavy hardcore punk with abrupt outburst of guitar-sheering attacks and a mean ass delivery! This is stripped to the bones and it aches! It retains its heaviness even when it's menacingly fast. When it does slow down it stomps like a beast about to pounce. I love it, the anger is so pure I can smell it. (Lydia) (4-track cassette, lyrics included, etberti@yahoo.com)

PRIMITIVE PACT – *End of the World* – Hey goth, fuck off! This is real punk putting the riot city back in the Tri-State area. Like society in general, a lot of modern day punk is controlled by the rich and privileged. This band is neither—they are societies rejects like the dregs that first formed the early days of punk. "Rich kids sit and count their money/but we weren't born so very lucky"—these guys earned ever note recorded on this tape. The sound is not noise, it's not raw, it's not goth, and PRIMITIVE PACT is not another clone. This band is the best thing to happen to punk since BOG PEOPLE and it's no surprise they share the same guitarist. Fuck hipster glue huffers, this is the real deal—solid and witty raw deal lyrics with the same cutting wit of 1982. May this band in true punk spirit bring a new age of city rockers. (Amelia) (9-song cassette, pay no more than $8 ppd, primitivepact1212@gmail.com, 579 Lafayette Street, Apartment #2, Brooklyn, NY 11216)

PRIMITIVE PACT – *End of the world* – Holy Shit. So you were super sad when BOG PEOPLE broke up? Well guess what, Andrew moved to Brooklyn and started a band. This new band takes everything you loved about BOG PEOPLE and turns it up a notch! PRIMITIVE PACT is the new blood of UK82 coming out of North America. They should tour with MANIA. This nine-song pro printed cassette is a non-stop, fist pumping, pogo till ya puke punk gem. Only 100 of these tapes were printed. Highly recommended! (Jeremy) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, primitivepact1212@gmail.com)

RADIANT MARKS – Let me start by first saying that reviewing demos can be really hard some times. It's a total blind grab. You have no idea what you are getting yourself into. That being said I'll give this a shot. The first few seconds into this tape and you think your deck is fucked up...but don't worry, they did this on purpose. RADIANT MARKS brings the sounds of a love child between ERIC BURDON AND THE ANIMALS with the WIPERS. These songs are very garage-y and somewhat psychedelic with dark undertones. This shit is good, just not my normal listen. (Jeremy) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, $6 ppd, Radiant Marks, 4767 Commonwealth, Detroit MI, 48208)

RAGANA – *All's Lost* – There's something in the well water of Olympia. Most everything coming out of there these days (at least at the DIY level) is thought out, inventive, inspired and interesting. RAGANA is no exception. They are two people playing witchy, stripped down, experimental black metal / sludge / atmospheric / inspired music. Sometimes the vocals grow from almost a whisper to a tortured scream as the drums boom along into messy blast beats that will pound your brain. At their quietest, most serene moments, they sound akin to their neighbors in DOGJAW, but blow all comparisons out of the water once they hit the distortion pedal. This is an excellent tape and I want to add that the band included some nice smelling moss as extra packing material in the envelope (which I am keeping with the tape on my shelf). (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, Rararagana.bandcamp.com)

RAJAT – *7-Track Demo* – Pulsing, powerful hardcore punk from Finland! Female vocals, plodding bass lines, shards of thick guitars and crashing drums make up a powerful handful of tracks that are delivered with fervor and speed. Reminds me of the better European anarcho-punk bands from the early zeros. This was also released as a CD-R on Kämäset Levyt records. Much potential, I would hear more from this band! (Lydia) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, rajat@hotmail.fi)

SOYA – *5 Track Demo* – This was recorded in 2010 and I guess never made it in for review until now. SOYA comes from Fresno, CA. You don't really here much about bands from that area these days. The demo is solid. Four songs by the band plus one DISRUPT cover. The DISRUPT cover gives away what you are in store for, but there is more. Ripping solos and dual F/M vocals. Furious energy and rough drumming really brings this together. Not sure if this band is still active, if so, I think they would be a crucial part of the central valley CA scene. No contact info is provided so you will have to do some research to obtain this demo. (Jeremy) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included)

SURVIVAL – *Civil War* – Dark, synth-y dark punk from Brooklyn. SURVIVAL has a strong SISTERHOOD vibe and would be perfect on a line up with RULE OF THIRDS, CRIMSON SCARLET or BELGRADO—and not just because it's female fronted. Like CRIMSON SCARLET and any SISTER band, there is a drum machine. The synth is sick—I haven't heard synth this strong since tweaked out weirdoes in the '80s. The riffs are dark and haunting similar to LOST TRIBE and the vocals are desperately pleading with a power of some serious soul. The vocals sound very 1980s British anarcho and unpolished while the lyrics are bleak and punk. There is not a bad song on this tape and they must be quite a presence live. An EP is demanded—the punks want more SURVIVAL. (Amelia) (6-song cassette, brilliant

lyrics included, $4 ppd, 104 Adelphi Street, #332, Brooklyn, NY 11205, jess.poplawski@gmail.com)

SUSAN ATKINS DIET – Their name is a witty play on "Atkins diet" and a nod to the Manson family, making this one sardonic band. They describe themselves as "surf rock riot girl book fiends." I describe them as 45 GRAVE mixed with BIKINI KILL. Their lyrics are very "up yours sexist system" with a refusal to conform to patriarchal nonsense. They ripped Raymond Pettibon art and included a PUSSY RIOT quote at the end of their lyric sheet—need I say more? These SUSAN ATKINS DIET ladies are killing it leaving you no choice to get in or get bent. (Amelia) (4-song CD-R, lyrics included, thesusanatkinsdiet@gmail.com, 1316 Windsor Edinburg Road, Princeton Jct, NJ 08550)

TORBEN – *Re Demo* – This one threw me for a loop. Looking at the tape and the fact it is coming out of Kansas City made me think I was in for some serious hardcore. No, not at all. TORBEN is bringing some heavy, drony, almost psychedelic jams here. FFO getting high and completely losing track of time while you drift through space. Strong elements of early KYLESA can be found here along with a stranger side like FLOOR. Not what I was expecting, but totally awesome. And I will say that I love how more bands are putting time and effort into their demos. (Jeremy) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, torbenrules@gmail.com)

TRAUMA HARNESS – *Leechman* – My favorite of the four Halloween cassingles submitted by Spotted Race. I reviewed a great tape of theirs a couple months back, and this stuff is right in line with the other stuff. Great, gothy punk. Did anyone pick up that STRANGE DOLLS CULT single five or so years back? This reminds me of that a bit. (Matt) (2-song cassette, lyrics included, Spotted Race, 21 W Garfield, Belleville, IL 62220)

TREPANNING – This Brooklyn band released a live set on WFMU as their first demo tape and it sounds amazing. The feel of their music is split pretty equally between catchy '00s garage punk like THOMAS FUNCTION and the halcyon days of the early New York punk of CBGB's, like TELEVISION and PATTI SMITH, without sounding retro or too nostalgic. This is not something I say often, but this really has a groove to it that works and I keep rewinding the thing over and over again Even though this is their first demo, this band already sounds confident and established without coming off as arrogant or too polished. This is easily my favorite demo of the month. (Greg) (7-song cassette, no lyrics included, www.trepanningbrooklyn@gmail.com)

UPSET – Members of G.A.S.H., KOWARD and NEGLIGENCE pretending they got stuck in the early '90s in a squat basement. This is apparently a "rushed" demo so the shit, lo-fi quality is allegedly not intentional, but is what I think makes the demo. It sounds like a basement show and the two basses contribute to the underwater sound. There is no guitar making this bass heavy and crusty. If you are a fan of EXTREME NOISE TERROR, DOOM, DISRUPT or BATTLE OF DISARM—get on this. It feels like being back in the warm womb of punk—no hype raw noise bullshit. This is just a down to earth dirty punk band comprised of rejects recorded badly with some noise outro weirdness that is rather scathing and scratches your inner eardrum a bit. (Amelia) (?-cassette, no lyrics, Upset, PO Box 82, Somerville, MA 02143-9998)

VALLEY BOYS – Usually, when people say that they play something like "simple, no bullshit punk rock," it just sounds like boring ass bar rock. I always wish it sounded more like this VALLEY BOYS tape that is blasting out of my stereo right now, because this shit sounds perfect. Equal parts DEAD BOYS, SUPERCHARGER and PROBLEMATICS with tons of attitude and hooks galore! Not one song on here is a sleeper or resembles anything close to bar rock. You want this! Unfortunately, the first batch is sold out, but write to them and persuade them to make more.... or put it on vinyl. This is golden. (Greg) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, Vboys666@gmail.com

THE VIPERS – On the one hand, this is stupid, amateurish three-chord punk with male / female vocals with song titles like "Katy Cumdumpster," "Stupid Bitch" and "30 Year Old Abortion." On the other hand, the band knows that they are playing three-chord amateurish punk and they don't give a fuck. Not to mention that it's really catchy and will totally get stuck in your head, whether you like it or not. But is it good? Yeah, it's good. (Greg) (12-song cassette, lyrics not included, Fermentedchaos@gmail.com)

VIRULENT MASS – Fuck this is so good! From Russia with no love. The vocals are throaty and raw, the guitars and bass create a brick-wall of hardcore sound, while the drumming, though slightly buried, pounds on relentlessly. Stark realism and pessimism run through the lyrics, which are in Russian but include an English commentary. The anger and disgust boil over and the use of sound clips make for a concrete outcome. There are no illusions, disappointment is very real and disdain for humanity is here to stay. This is hardcore today and it fucking floors! I am kicking myself for sitting on this for so long! Someone interview this band *now*! Find it through Mad Fly records or Drink and Be Merry records. Thanks to Oleg for sending this and for the awesome looking receipt from, what I assume is, the Russian post office! (Lydia) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, 3 euros with postage, alco_myxa@mail.ru, madfly.punxunite.ru, drinkandbemerry.noblogs.org)

WAX MOTH – *Spiracle* – Crusty death metal from Iowa. In the same vein as current bands like SHADOW OF THE DESTROYER with the heaviness of early KYLESA or DAMAD. The galloping drums, evil guitar and blackened death metal vocals carry this demo through and through. I was not expecting this to be so solid—a must get if you like blackened crust or punk death metal with a heavy crust influence. There's nothing pretty about this band—they're straight unrelenting Midwest crust with no breaks. (Amelia) (6-song cassette, no lyrics included, waxmothcrust@gmail.com, waxmoth.bandcamp.com, Bradley Nordling, 3701 2nd Street Trir 48, Coralville, IA 52241-3240)

WRITE OFF – *Terror Compound Demos* – What if NO COMMENT were 75% mosh breakdowns? That seems like it would be pretty good and I bet when they played really sped up it would sound sick. Yeah. WRITE OFF is four old punks from Vancouver testing my theory...and proving me right. Singer has golden pipes and the riffs are stellar—brush up on your menacing creepy crawl. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, writeoffvancouver@gmail.com)

XTRAMEDIUM – Upbeat, clean guitar driven, fast, nice-sounding pop-punk that has a vague THIS BIKE IS A PIPEBOMB feel to it. It sounds good, but it doesn't really go anywhere. (Greg) (4-song CD-R, no lyrics included, busstoppress.bandcamp.com)

V/A – Desastre Sonoro – Cool DIY compilation of new Los Angeles bands. MAL PASO kicks it off with four tracks of driving bass-and-drums-only D-beat punk—sounds like early '90s TOTALITAR if they didn't have a guitar player. Up next, CONDITION rips through a raw combination of d-beat, hardcore, and noise-punk. ASPEX rips through three tracks of Finnish hardcore tribute (including a KAAOS cover), complete with Finnish lyrics. And then ATRAKO does a brilliant, quick instrumental dark deathrock track that got me on my feet for a minute! Woah! That came outta nowhere! Then they thrash through their awesome hollered, frantic Latino hardcore à la MIGRA VIOLENTA, or something like that. PESSIMIST wraps this sampler up with three tracks that sorta blend black metal, BOMBANFALL and WRETCHED—if you can imagine that. All around an impressive, diverse collection of some hot new shit outta LA! (Matt) (17-song cassette, no lyrics, jose_alonso62@yahoo.com, desastresonoro323@gmail.com)

V/A – Nuestra Forma De Pensar – Before I even begin to *listen* to this tape, I can tell you that it is great. "Why?" you ask. Because Teodoro, the man behind the Alta Intensidaz imprint, is one of the great, true believers of punk, protest, and all that is truly good. This comp is a "mixtape" of sorts, that Teo has compiled for the righteous benefit of spreading message and music that he loves, believes in, and is inspired by...as simple as that. The comp features RATAS RABIOSAS from Peru; PILTRAFAS PUNK and AVICHINES from Mexico; LAB RATS, PROYECTOS DE PABLO RATA, CHEMTRAILS, MAL CUERPO, SENTENCIA and ATENTADO, all from Spain, and LIMALLA from Cuba. The comp starts off with some great primal, stomping, 1-2-1-2 punk from PILTRAFAS PUNK, before things speed up slightly for the equally-raw hardcore bashings of RATAS RABIOSAS. Third up, AVICHINES, mix it up with a tune that almost sounds like it could be like '77-punk proto-GISM, and others that feel familiar to "Pay to Cum"-era BAD BRAINS, in simplicity. Flip tape. LAB RATS drops one track of completely falling apart, speedy thrashing bash, that's over before you can soak up how killer it is. The PROYECTOS DE PABLO RATA tracks are also complete fucking skid-ish, primitive, DISCHARGE / MG15-informed killers. I can't help but think of INFIERNO DE COBARDES. Awesome. The CHEMTRAILS tracks that follow are also impressive in a different direction of speedy, complex, tight thrashers. MAL CUERPO brings things back to a more raw, and primitive approach, before returning to AVICHINES' punkers. SENTENCIA tracks are savage as fuck live tunes, of pure anger, pure energy and pure un-corrupted attack. I loved the ATENTADO 7" and their tracks here carry on that tradition of blazing DISCHARGE influenced ragers—fucking great stuff. Last up is LIMALLA from fucking *Cuba*!!! Their two tunes are on the poppier, melodic, catchier side of things, but still punk as fuck in every way. An impressive, inspiring comp. (Justin) (45-song cassette, no lyrics included, trade for demos or zines only, Teodoro Hernández, Carretera de Bajamar 165, Apto 20, 38250 La Laguna, Tenerife, SPAIN)

V/A – What We've Done Is Secret – Legitimately killer comp of bands from Boise, Idaho. The excitement of a young scene is evident in the presentation and the variety of bands reflects a crew of kids that doesn't have the luxury of division. Personal favorites for this guy: PIG NOOSE, VIPE (even though they are just covers), CHRISTWRONG, DEMONI and TOILET BABIES, but every band is well worth a listen. Boise. Who knew? (Robert) (27-song cassette, lyrics included, 501 N, Orchard St., Boise, ID 83706, headbonesmerch@gmail.com, or free at: www.headbonesmerch.com/downloads.html)

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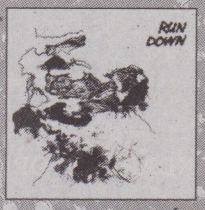

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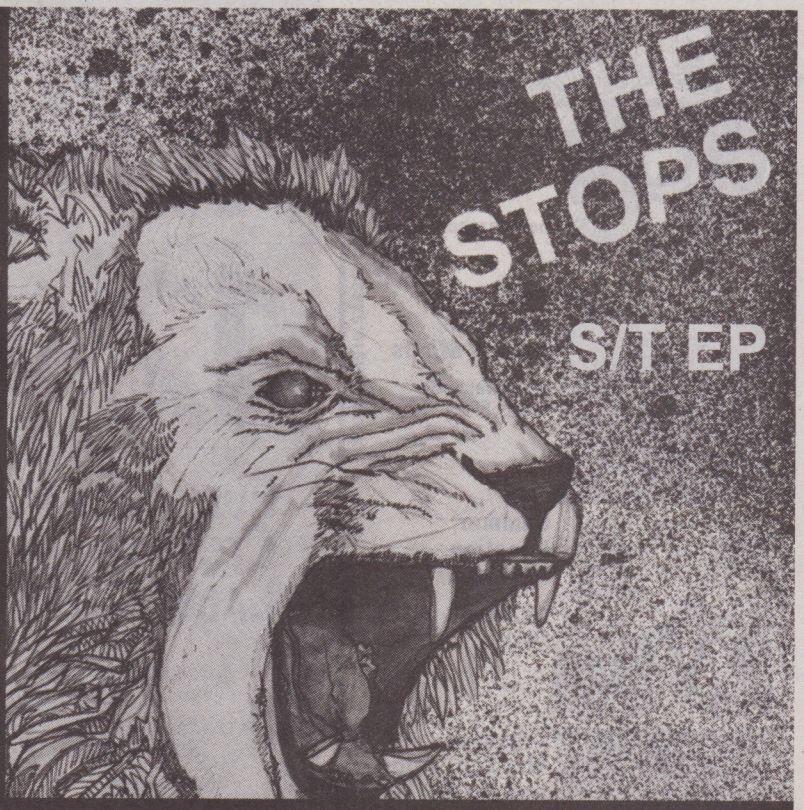

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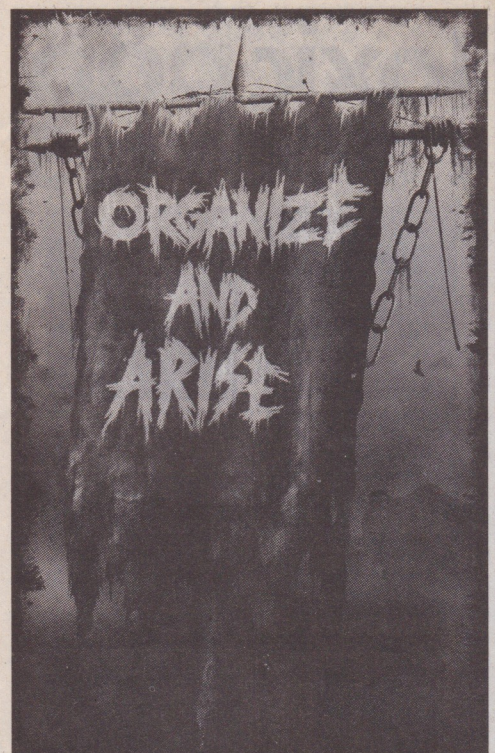

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ZINES

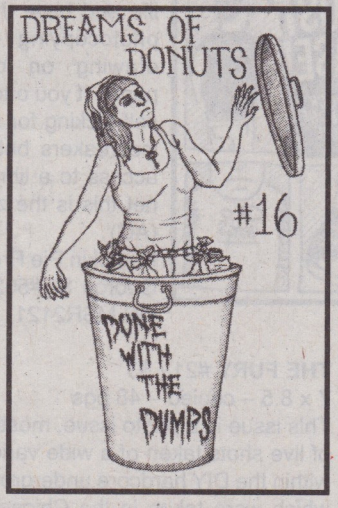
Send zines for review to: MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please include the following info on a separate piece of paper with your zine: postpaid price, international price, do you take trades?, size, copied or printed?, number of pages, language, mailing address, website address, email address.

Reviews by:
(MB) Mariam Bastani
(JB) Julia Booze
(EC) E.Conner
(AE) Amelia Eakins
(FF) Francesca Foglia
(DG) Dan Goetz
(LG) Layla Gibbon
(DJ) Danny Gresham
(OG) Oscar Gutierrez
(SL) Sam Lefebvre
(BL) Brad Lambert
(MM) Marissa Magic
(KM) Kevin Manion
(JM) Jeff Mason
(LA) Lydia Phelps
(CR) Casey Ress

AGUA PURA / $1 US, £1 UK, trades OK
4.25 x 5.5 – printed – 48 pgs
Due to increasingly oppressive U.S. border policies, more and more people looking to migrate to the United States from Mexico face deportation, illegal persecution and possible death as aggressive lockdowns on urban border towns compel many to face the desert in an attempt to cross over undetected. In an effort to prevent the increasing death tolls, many groups have mobilized to provide direct aid in the form of medical attention, food and water drop-offs, directions and communication between migrants and their families. Kathleen, an EMT from the UK, spent just one summer month in a medical tent providing first aid to sick travelers and *Agua Pura* is her personal report back. Beautifully rendered in three colors, with drawings of the desert, its travelers and her experiences with both. This is not a travel story, propaganda or a diary. It's not a manifesto and it's not a boast. It's a brief glimpse into the experience and resistance of one person on the privileged side of a racist border war—a bleak picture painted unforgettably well. (FF)
agua.pura.zine@gmail.com

ANIMUS MAXIMUS #1 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 16 pgs
A zine about the odd world of Water Bears, which are the tiniest of bugs, also known as Tardigrades, able to survive in the vacuum of space, among other fascinating facts. This handcrafted zine was driven by the inspiring feeling the author got upon being blessed with profound knowledge—in this day and age facilitated by websites such as Wikipedia. I am sending the next issue of this to one of our most trusted proofreaders, Sarah C., who is an entomologist; I'm sure she'd appreciate this effort. As for me, I also get a kick out of small, seemingly useless facts, tidbits and snippets of info. Yet this also has a touch of worldly insight—Tardigrades can survive "1000 times more radiation that almost any other known creature!" Plus, with the help of some water, they have the ability to reanimate after a *decade* of cryptobiosis (when all cellular and molecular development halts). The author finds this a rather hopeful microorganism—given that it shares the same basic DNA as us destructive humans and will continue to live on looong after we have wiped ourselves out—and I am inclined to agree. (LA)
2747 Dupont Ave., Apt. 102 / Minneapolis / MN 55408

AS BOREDOM SETS IN Summer 2012 / $2.50
7 x 8.5 – copied – 36 pgs
Newest installment of this sporadically produced cut and paste zine. The layout on this one is particularly great (it looks almost painfully punk) and the creator has damn fine taste in music. In this summer edition he interviews KBD weirdos the Secret Prostitutes, along with Texas garage rockers Video and Richmond ragers the Slugz. In addition to the chats, there's also a decent mini-column about a journey the creator took over the summer to one of his favorite local Indian restaurants. Lastly, there are a shit ton of record and zine reviews. The writing overall isn't the best I've come across and a couple of the record reviews made me roll my eyes, but this guy definitely appreciates hardcore, so I hope to see more from this zine down the road. (KM)



1719 W. Albion / Chicago / IL 60626 / www.eattheliferecords.blogspot.com

BREAKFAST FOR DINNER #2 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 27 pgs
Oh, Portland. This zine is more or less *Portlandia* meets *My Dinner With Andre* meets cumbersome Northwest zinester who thinks the mundane details of his life are worth committing to paper (and if this were a "tumblr" absolutely no one would give a shit). Comics that are admittedly well-drawn alternate with typewritten text about ho-hum daily routine and "deep" conversations about, well, breakfast for dinner, long distance relationships, and so forth. No one needs to write about doing their goddamn chores or watching television. I blame Microcosm for making this shit so accessible in the city of roses. At least Ben Snakepit got himself into fun/stupid situations. (DG)
c/o Marc Parker / 5307 N. Minnesota Ave N. / Portland / OR 97217 /
mrparker@zinethug.com

DEAD MECCA Issue 1 / $4 ppd
8.5 x 11 – copied – 32 pgs
It's funny that I got this for review because I ran into the zine's author at 1-2-3-4 Go! records a few weeks back and he showed me the unfinished version of this. The pages were each a crispy one-inch thick with his cut'n'paste style. Seeing the amount of work put into this, including the numerous hand drawn sections throughout, gives me some insight that I actually don't think you even need to appreciate this zine. Its layout is super cool and the content lives up to the aesthetics of this zine. Within these pages you read short stories, most by the author Rob Fletcher, about various roadside attractions. Don't be fooled, this zine does not read like a guide book, but rather touches on some serious self-reflection in the spirit of adventure, appreciation and/or derision that these weird and often tour trap "attractions" require to appreciate. Each story is a good read and if you have any sense of curiosity in seeing the largest Artichoke or petrified Mermaids and pursuing the wonderful oddities that make living an unpredictable but fun time, this is for you. Loved this zine. (MB)
Rob Fletcher / 415 Bellevue Ave #22 / Oakland / CA 94610

DEGENERATE #11 / $5
8.5 x 11 – copied – 16 pgs
Bound for glory since its start, *Degenerate* is a cut above the breathless, frantic and made-in-five-minutes nature one may come to expect of the fanzine format. Where so many punk record reviews fall short of a true description, Sam performs a sonic autopsy

on records that some may not even give a second spin, most notably in this issue American Snakeskin's *Turquoise for Hello*. Aesthetically somewhere between the old *Starfucker* zines, *Search and Destroy*, and early '80s *Sub Pop* fanzine releases, there's more than a tinge of the nostalgic in these pages. Not included with this reviewer copy is a flexi disc release by Musk, alongside a blood-from-a-stone interview with the band. Thoughtful, cerebral and charmingly high-falutin', *Degenerate* is always, at the very least, a pleasure. (FF)
Sam / PO Box 3272 / Berkeley / CA 94703 / degeneratezine@gmail.com

DREAMS OF DONUTS #16 / $2 US, $3 World, trades OK
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 32 pgs
Dear loyal zine review readers, I know sometimes it seems like I like everything, and maybe my standards are continuously reaching as far below zero as the Fahrenheit in MPLS (dude, we're grading on a curve here!) but hear me out. I *love this*. Let's first understand what we're dealing with. Awesome comic, funny in the ways you would expect, cleverly rendered and punk as fuck. It entirely assumes the reader is returning, no hapless explanations for newbies, which makes for an immediate connection. It's just so *real*. Heather talks about all the same struggles most humans face. Displacement, heartbreak, begrudging appreciation for one's home no matter how shitty it seems, family bullshit, negotiating traveling and penniless-ness and needing to carve out space in life to just heal—even when that means facing the reality of not living up to so many goals than were made as anti-depression tactics in the first place. I just can't recommend this enough. (JB)

Heather Wreckage / 3913 Boyle Ct. / Sacramento / CA 95817 / all4choice@hotmail.com

EQUALIZINGXDISTORT Vol.12 #4 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 24 pgs
An oral history of an all ages dance night/show series called "Start Dancing" comprises 99% of the latest edition of this long-running Canadian zine. Said dance night originated in Toronto in 1981 and lasted only a few years, but reading this comprehensive chronicle of the events gave me the impression that not only were the gatherings an alternative social space for people uninterested in mainstream youth culture, they were also a jumping off point for many bands and industry folks up North. While I wish the interviewees shared more interesting/sketchy stories about "Start Dancing" and used less breath delving into the organizational aspects of the congregations, this was a pretty cool read all in all. Also included in this issue are some reviews of recent hardcore records, which indicate that the minds behind *EqualizingxDistort* aren't just living in the past. (KM)
www.equalizingxdistort.blogspot.com

FASCINATING FOLKS / $4
5.5 x 8 – copied – 58 pgs
With its 12-point Times New Roman font and formulaic computer printout quality, this zine reads like a series of book reports on obscure, vaguely interesting people. Stories about a Japanese nihilist anarchist, Brazilian knife fighting queen, wannabe R&B singer and possible French royalty raised in 19th century Oregon seem like they would be way interesting, but this zine reads like somebody reciting Wikipedia articles during a boring party, at length. The few drawings do break up the tedium a little bit, but are rarely of the most interesting parts of the subject's life and have the quality of photocopying a pencil drawing on construction paper. If you often find yourself lacking for small talk or icebreakers but don't have access to a library or internet this is the zine for you. (AG)
Pumpkin Pie Press / 277 St. George St #502 / Toronto / ON.MSR2121

THE FURY #21 / $3
7 x 8.5 – copied – 48 pgs
This issue is a photo issue, mostly consisting of live shots taken of a wide variety of bands within the DIY hardcore underground, most of which were taken in the Chicago area over the last fifteen years. The zine design is decent and the photos themselves do a good job of capturing the action of the given live shows, but unfortunately are sloppily reproduced and too highly-contrasted to make out important details. This isn't as important when pictures and images play a supporting role, but is kind of important when they're the driving force behind a given issue. (DG)
c/o Mark Novotny / 5413 6th Ave. / Countryside / IL 60525 / thefuryzine@hotmail.com

GENEVA13 #18 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 59 pgs
This is one of my favorite US zines right now. Co-edited by Girth records founder Kevin Dunn, every issue is well thought out and well put together, sticking true to the theme of "a zine of the local" without being elitist or exclusive. *Geneva13* always covers issues that could pertain to their community but can be translated onto the national and global scale. This issue is about apples and is formed around three central essays that are actually interviews with an apple farmer, a migrant worker/apple picker, and scientist from Cornell University. These three interviews give perspective to the humble apple and what makes an organic, local, product so powerful and intense on a national and international scale. (DJ)
PO Box 13 / Geneva / NY 14456 / mail@geneva13.com / www.geneva13.com

GOLDEN STATE ADVANTAGE / $3 ppd, $4 World
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 16 pgs
Color photos of cute people. They live in filth and like to hop trains. I dunno, can't you just like walk around to see this shit? What's with the simulacrum? There isn't much of a linear story here or anything but portraits but there is a bare ass. Is it named after a Neon Piss song, or the epidemic of a glorified poverty that the song is about, or just like the EBT card? Get into it, or don't. (EC)
Bryan / 3536 N. Haight Ave / Portland / OR 97227 / brybry@riseup.net

IF THE KIDS ARE UNITED #10 / free
8.5 x 11 – copied – 12 pgs
These kids are pretty into puttin' on shows and making their own scene. Offensive records of New Jersey offers a history and rationale, and Gary of Kutztown punks Rodent Lord is interviewed. Local show listings, rants and a punk tattoo gallery finish it up. This is a cost-effective way to take the pulse of the South Jersey and environs basement scene. (JM)
PO Box 891 / Philadelphia / PA 19105 / ifthekidsareunitedphilly@yahoo.com

IT'S JUST A PHASE / £?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 44 pgs
This is just one in a series of simply awesome zines, made by Max Mitchell in England. I first picked up his *Back on the Bins* zine through a posi vegan HC friend of mine back home, WAK. Knowing WAK, I knew it was going to be top-notch stuff and I was right. A couple years down the road Max sent me another bunch of his zines (*You're My Boy, Blue.*, *I See Blue! and he Looks Glorious!* and *Blue! Do You Trust That I Do Not Want to See You Die Here Tonight?*) and they too are all just wonderful. Each zine may have a different name, but they all follow a similar pattern of content and layout. This one, *It's Just a Phase – A Punk Rock Straight Edge Vegan Zine* is a fine example of his hard work. Hand-drawn covers that rock, select images and neat/tidy layout, this is cut with care and pasted with precision; a zine that geeks out about punk and HC and indulges in the trivia as much as it embraces the ethos. "Over-Used Concepts in Hardcore," "Stage Diving

Safety Tips," Hardcore Hospitality Guide" (complete with menus and recipes to do it yourself), "Tips for Touring," "You Know You've Sold Out When…," "Organise your Record Collection," "The Straight Edge Militancy Test," "Contemporary Hardcore Dance Moves" (complete with awesome hand-drawn figures), "Things Hardcore Should Re-Learn from Punk," "Beginners Guide to Edgebreaking," "Anatomy of a Mosh Pit," reviews, lists, funny mocks of HC stereotypes and so much more—every issue is packed! Never taking himself too seriously, though never forgetting the seriousness of what we do, this zinester is great at making a zine that's a fun experience for the reader. Funny, sincere, well written and prepared with perfectionist care, I highly recommend this! (LA)
Max Mitchell / 56 South View Crescent / Sheffield / S7 1DH / UK

JUNK ZINE #7 / $3 or trade, free to prisoners (stamps appreciated)
8.5 x 11 – copied – 30 pgs
Woah this is a really cool thing! A punk prisoner zine. It looks like its put together outside, but most of the contributing material is from prisoners. Art, poetry, letters, resources and personal ads abound. It's a beautiful black and white layout of prisoner illustration and collage. If you do a prisoner project in your town, are incarcerated, or like pen pals hit this up. In light of the most recent Grand Juries (and always), it is important to remember those inside. (EC)
PO Box 950 / Spokane / WA 99210

KILL YR PARENTS' GARDEN #6 / $3
8.5 x 11 – copied – 28 pgs
Macklin is back with another issue of this really cool fanzine from the Midwest. Straightforward and easy to read, plus it eliminates the mental anguish of having to pick up Thrasher to read that Ian MacKaye interview on skateboarding, by reprinting it for the punx!! Features recent tape and show reviews and photos of featured bands—Outlook from Olympia, Hysterics, Xtra Vomit, Cloud Rat and more! There's also an interview with the guy who does Vegan Skate blog, but I skipped it, because who fuckin' cares! (FF)
SSF Tapes / 3306 E. Lakeshore Dr. / Wonder Lake / IL / 60097

LIFEFAIL #4 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 10 pgs
Spikey punk scene zine from Halifax. It's mainly quick, who-are-you, what-do-you-do style interviews with a bunch of barely born Halifax bands. Then there's a story about being busted by the cops in a graveyard, and then a bunch of pictures of bands. Cool times. (MM)
www.lifefailzine.tumblr.com

NODE PAJOMO Winter 2012 / $2 ppd, $3 World
5.5 x 11 – copied – 24 pgs
This is a combination of what normally appear as two separate zines, *Node Pajomo* and *Pukka Joint Massif*. *NP* is a directory or sorts for mail artists internationally. It includes many short listings soliciting participants in mail art projects. The listings are consistently peculiar and an amusing read even to the non-mail art inclined. There are cryptic listings, clever listings and bizarre ones. The more outlandish listings are described in a surprisingly frank, matter of fact tone. The less-unusual projects are described simply and seem giddy and inspired. It's interesting to read so many different tones and attitudes displayed side-by-side, revolving around the same microcosm of mail art, an activity that's actually persevered for decades. *Pukka Joint Massif,* which comprises the second half of this publication, is comprised of zine reviews. The reviewer is clearly engaged with their subjects and not afraid to criticize, although they never become flippantly dismissive. *Maximum Rocknroll* is reviewed and the writer admits they don't really read this publication, then proceeds to complain of the record reviews that they all "reference the same obscure band that exactly twelve people… have knowledge of." For when the publisher skips most of this issue of *MRR*'s content and arrives at this review, I must assert that I deliberately abstain from referencing other bands in my record reviews, especially obscure ones, so I don't appreciate the generalization. I'll send my zine to *Pukka Joint Massif* in the spirit of mutual criticism. Regardless, this zine is dutifully laid out by hand and delightfully contains ephemera bound haphazardly throughout. (SL)

Node Pajomo / PO Box 2632 / Bellingham / WA 98227 / nodepajomo@gmail.com

NO GODS NO MATTRESS #18 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – color copied – 78 pgs
It was really hard for me to get over the beginning of this zine. The writer was unsure of what to do in a paradise like Maui for a month. It all sounded like first-world whining from traveling crust dawgs. Turns out the zine evolves into one about healing and self-education about safe spaces, boundaries and the search for the native local culture. In the end I can respect that. (DJ)
PO Box 3936 / Berkeley / CA 94703B

OLD MAN WHEELER #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 12 pgs
Max named his zine after himself because it is about himself. Clad in a bright letterpressed and silkscreened (?) cover with a doodle of his hippie parents and a mean wolf. Teen wolf I get it. Max dwells on self-conscious behaviors, love, nudity and childhood bullying. It's a quick read. (EC)
Max Wheeler / 1200 Boyle St / Pittsburgh / PA 15212

ONE WAY TICKET #7? / $4 ppd US and Canada, $5 World
4.5 x 5.5 – copied – 50 pgs
I love coming across zines like this, utterly beautiful letter-pressed cover, primarily text-heavy stories lightly laced with woodcut illustration, a tone of wistfulness for time passing us (using it to the fullest) and radical ideas informing our lives. Think "YouthYouthYouth" by Generation X. This is high caliber writing here, folks. The last issue of this zine I saw was more of a classic cut and paste layout, and now there is no wasted time, nor space, with visual antics. The writing takes center stage and it is damn good, stories with familiar themes of hitchhiking, the serendipity of the traveling life, crushes, abandoned buildings, and so forth. Curiously, included is a "work of pure fiction" that I'm wondering how truly fictitious it can be, with some nods to Evasion lifestyle-tactics and the offensive phrase "First World Problems" all in the work of creating a backdrop to talk about hearing Against Me! in a mall store and being confused about the unintended consequences of anarchism being a talking point for mainstream youth. Don't be fooled by what may seem like something you have read before, because Grandma Booz *definitely* has, and was still totally consumed and enchanted by the artful telling of these tales…even if it is ultimately a deep cuts celebration of all things "twenty-something". (JB)
onewayticketzine@gmail.com

PARADISE COVE #3 Street Rock & Roll Magazine! / free
8.5 x 11 – printed – 64 pgs – German/English
When I saw Cock Sparrer at Chaos in Tejas in 2009—it was a little scary. I think there was a Business show going on the same night around the corner and there were big boy skins everywhere. And by big, I mean big. Big and mean and presumably from Texas and not like the R.A.S.H. skins I grew up with, but like the other kind who are looking for trouble and are like "bros" in Fred Perry. There were lots of braces and sweaty, beefy flesh covered in trad tattoos just like in this here zine. I remember thinking this couldn't be good, as I was surrounded by these big boys and I honestly would have felt safer in a sea of oogles. To get to my point, this zine is like swimming in a sea of skinhead testosterone like that sweaty Texas night. Cock Sparrer was amazing, by the way. Anyway, this zine

is mostly in German but a few pages were in English. The only band that caught my attention was Razorcut. Unfortunately, their interview was side tracked by the novelty of "pretty girls" being in a band. The interviewer for Paradise Cove posed the following question to Razorcut, "I knew your songs before I realized that two women are in the band. Big surprise! This is really rare in our scene, especially with such a hard sound! Were there any negative reactions, such as 'pretty girls do not belong in a skinhead band?' or other stupid comments? The scene is very open-minded these days, but there's always a big tough guy attitude in it. Or has there been helpful criticism?" Anyway, you get the gist. If you like tough guy Oi! and may have had a drunken homoerotic encounter with your mate after last call at the pub but never told anyone because "you're not a fag, right?" then this zine is for you. (AE)
Bandworm records / E.K., Schwiesaustr. 11 / 39124 Magdeburg / Germany / order@bandwormrecords.de

PIKAKELAUKSELLAMAAILMANLOPPUUN #5 / 5? or $6
6 x 8.75 – copied – 96 pgs – Finnish/English
There is plenty of material here in a nice square-bound format. *PML* (as we call this zine for short—it's on the cover) uses the cut and paste style and relevant, or not, graphics behind the text. There are some cool band shots of the kids just hangin'. Most of the writing is in Finnish, including the reviews, the write-up of the Punk Illegal fest in Göteborg in 2011, an interview with Total Recall, and numerous other pieces whose content I was unsure of. In English are interviews with the US bands Coke Bust and From the Depths and Barcelona's Belgrado. The interviews are interesting and good. A Finnish translation of the Microcosm pamphlet, *Identity Crisis* by Jennifer Lorangin is provided along with the English original, though I don't know if this is the whole pamphlet or not. The part I can read is good enough for me to think this zine is worth a look. (JM)
pikakelauksellamaailmanloppuun@gmail.com

SCAM #9 / $3
5 x 8.5 – printed – 40 pgs
Sometimes you read zines that are better than books about the same subject—obviously this is a frequent occurrence in punk rock. Those that get paid to write about such subjects frequently demonstrate their disconnectedness from our realities, our cultures and ideas and yet their books end up being the definitive reference for so many! At any rate, this issue of *Scam* is a detailed history of the making of Black Flag's *Damaged*. It includes interviews with *everyone* involved, and is as much about hanging out and being a dissolute anti-authority youth as it is homage to one of the most powerful LPs of all time. It captures the excitement, fucked up antics, the possibility and, of course, the fucking sound. What Greg Ginn wanted Black Flag to sound like, how Dukowski channeled the darkness of Los Angeles' cultural history, from noir movies to Manson, all the shit that made the record what it was... Seriously, this is an incredible zine, so much work went into it and it shows. Inspiration point. Will make you want to do something both meaningless and meaningful as is inherent in the possibility of punk rock, demonstrated both by this zine and by the untouchable Black Flag. (LG)
1011 Bedford #3 / Brooklyn / NY 11205

SEVENTEEN TELEVISION / $?
5.5 x 11 – printed – 36 pgs
This is the second collection of fiction from Clorox Girls front man Justin Maurer. His stories are based on his own eclectic array of life experience. Written from first-person perspective, they present loose accounts of playing music abroad, family dysfunction and economic adversity. Maurer sculpts very rich characters, depicts absurd situations in hysterical terms and never assumes any knowledge on behalf of his audience—all very valuable assets to fiction. His weakness lies in leading the reader through his narrative arc. The identities of speakers and order of events sometimes becomes convoluted. Otherwise, Maurer is an extremely clever and sincere writer capable of eliciting laughs and sobs from his readers in the same paragraph. There was no information provided with this review copy on purchasing the zine, but it appears to be published by a group called Vol. 1 Brooklyn and is likely available through them! (SL)
Justin Maurer / 1569 N. Serrano Ave / Los Angeles / CA 90027 / www.justin-maurer.com / www.vol1brooklyn.com

SHOCK & AWE! #5 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – printed – 64 pgs
Shock and awe is precisely my reaction to this zine, but definitely more of the latter! This is a 64-page nicely printed, not-for-profit zine acting as a sort of a Malaysian scene report, specifically Kuala Lumpur and Klang Valley. Also accompanying this zine is a four-band 7" comp of current stuff from there, but you can read about that in the Record Reviews section. A great amount of passion and true punk collaboration is highly evident here! You can tell the contributors and coordinators are really involved and dedicated to this, and, though it is brimming with all the current scene info, it also contains plenty of writing about the last 20+ years of Malaysian punk as well. Features: essays on the DIY movement/Malaysian hardcore history, info on the Rumah Api punk community space, thorough interviews with Malaysian DIY punk labels and the bands on the comp, columns, reviews of Malaysian punk/HC releases and retrospective/interviews with Malaysian punk pioneers Carburetor Dung and the Bollocks. The common thread throughout the whole thing is DIY ethics and what they mean in the context of their community. The writers are very introspective, creative and socially aware, and the analyses are deep and inspiring. I highly recommend this to all *MRR* readers and I will definitely be following this zine from now on! Just to give due credit, I want to mention that this particular special release was a collective effort by *Shock & Awe* magazine, Cactus records, Knot records, Rumah Api and others around Klang Valley! (MA)
Knot records c/o Wan Alauddin / PO Box 10394 / 50712 Kuala Lumpur / Malaysia / knotrecords.wordpress.com / shockawemedia.wordpress.com / shock.awe00@gmail.com / cactus distro.weebly.com

STITCHES IN MY HEAD #4 / $3
8.5 x 11 – copied – 26 pgs
I reviewed the first issue of this zine, which Christina put out when she was spending time in Portland, and low and behold, she's up to issue #4. This writing and vibe of this issue is less on-the-fly, which I can only assume came from being away from home, but it's just as good, if not better. Her writing is intelligent, analytical and cynical, but completely unpretentious. The interviews with Royal Headaches and Bits of Shit read like entertaining conversations, her longer-form writing, including the intro and an extended review of the Hank Wood and the Hammerheads LP is her strongest work, and the record and zine reviews are far above average. The layout is excellent cut-and-paste work, though it could've benefitted from a better copier that didn't darken things too much. Still, definitely a zine that has the potential to have as much name recognition as any number of other full-size music zines that have come out in the last few years, and is already better than a few of them. It even comes with a great poster to hang on your wall (a rare example of this sort of thing not being a total throwaway waste of time). (DG)
stitchesinmyhead.blogspot.com / stitchesinmyheadfanzine@gmail.com

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #242 / ??
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 32 pgs – Finnish
Yes! Another edition of this long-running Finnish punk zine! This issue features interviews with Cross Stitched Eyes, tour diaries from Vivisektio and the Total Recall/Antiklimax tour, show reviews and a ton of record reviews. All of this is in Finnish and I unfortunately do not speak Finnish, so I can't tell you much more about the content. But, hey, the fact that this zine has been going strong for many years should be an indicator to all punks that they are doing something right. Awesome! (MB)
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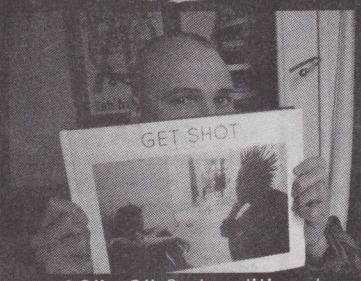

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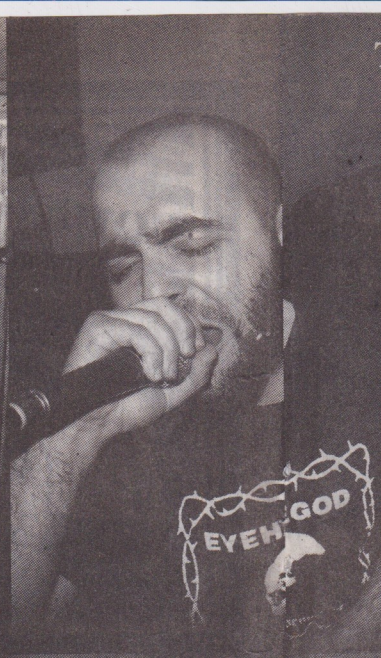

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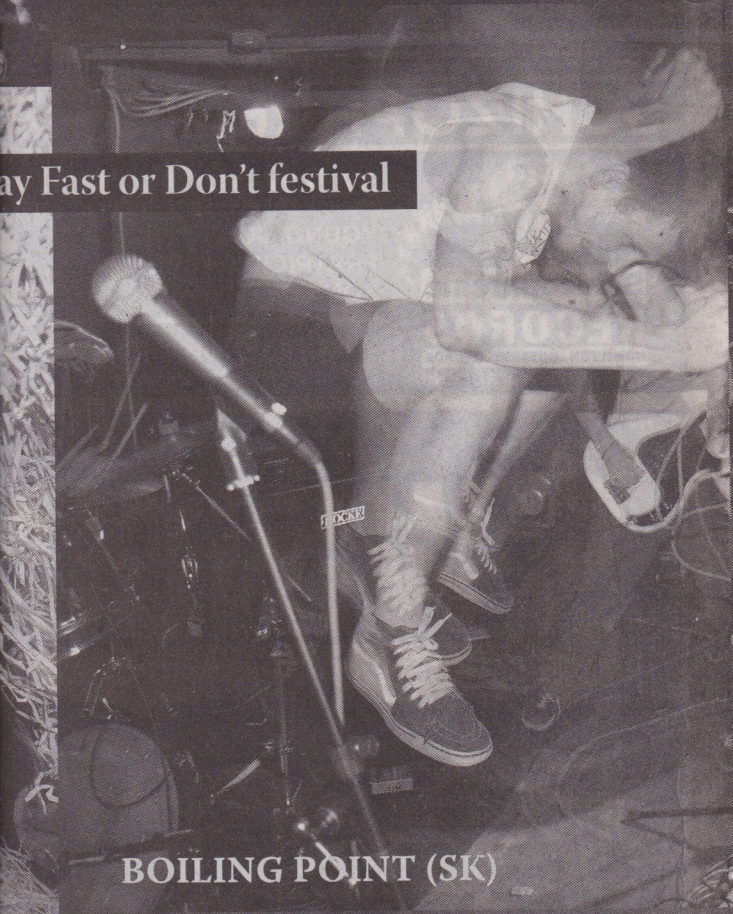

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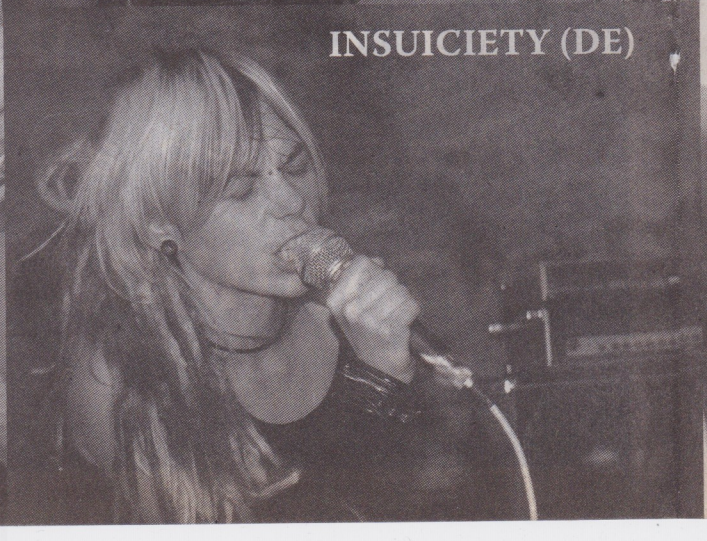

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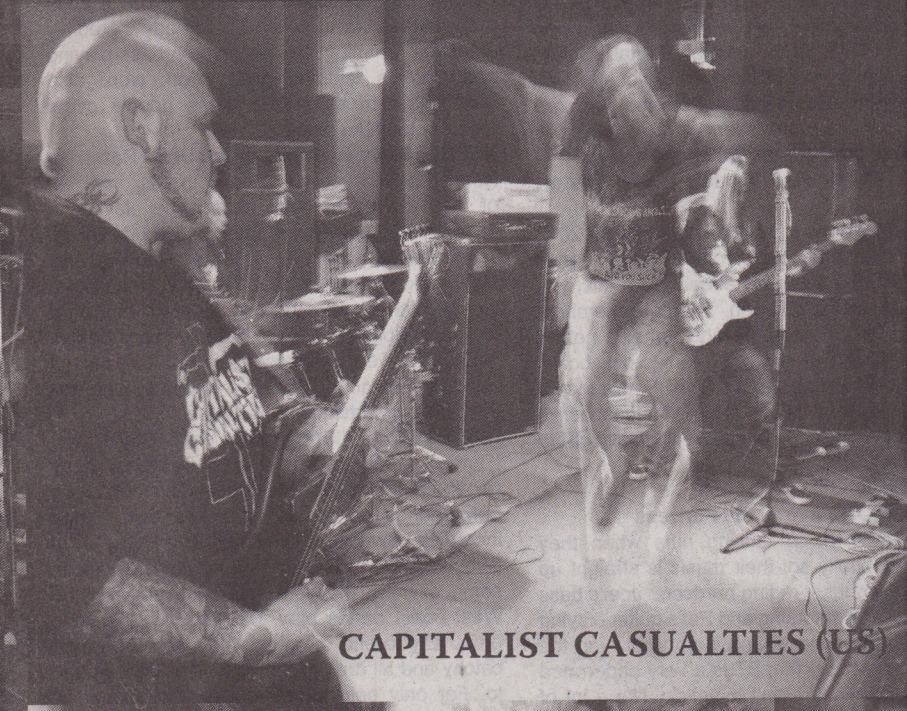

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